Syllabus and study guide

Taxation Zimbabwe (E1 ZWE)



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 Zimbabwe tax system as applicable to individuals, single companies and groups of companies.

2. Introduction to the syllabus

The syllabus for E1 Taxation (E1 ZWE) starts by introducing candidates to the functions and systems applicable to Zimbabwe tax, including sources of revenue 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 Zimbabwe taxation as they affect the activities of individuals and businesses, beginning with income tax. The syllabus covers the taxation of income from employment, self-employment, property and investments including the availability of exemptions and reliefs.

The next technical area covered by the syllabus is corporation tax, in particular the profits which are chargeable to corporation tax, how the corporation tax liability is computed and exemptions and reliefs available to single companies and groups of companies.

The syllabus then moves on to cover capital gains. The syllabus covers the basic principles of computing gains and losses and the computation of capital gains tax taking into account relevant exemptions and reliefs.

Next in the syllabus is the national social security and pension/benefit fund contributions implications for employed and self-employed persons and employers.

Lastly, the syllabus covers the scope, calculation and administration of value added tax (VAT).

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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 Zimbabwe tax system and its administration, the obligations of taxpayers and/or their agents, and the implications of non-compliance
- Analyse and calculate the income tax liabilities of individuals
- Analyse and calculate the corporation tax liabilities of companies and groups of companies
- Analyse and calculate the capital gains tax liabilities of individuals and companies
- Analyse and calculate the effect of national social security (NSSA) and pension/benefit fund contributions on employees, employers and the self-employed
- Analyse and calculate the effects of value added tax (VAT) 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 Zimbabwe tax system and its administration

1. Zimbabwe taxes
2. Principal sources of revenue law and practice
3. The systems for self-assessment, the making of returns, submission of information, claims and the procedures relating to enquiries, objections, appeals and disputes

B Income tax liabilities

1. The scope of 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 time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

C Corporation tax liabilities

1. The scope of corporation tax
2. Profits chargeable to corporation tax
3. The comprehensive computation of corporation tax liability
4. The effect of a group corporate structure for corporation tax purposes
5. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

D Capital gains

1. The scope of the taxation of capital gains
2. The basic principles of computing gains and losses
3. Gains and losses on the disposal of immovable property and marketable securities
4. The computation of capital gains tax and the use of exemptions and reliefs
5. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

E National social security and pension/benefit fund contributions

1. The scope of the national social security system
2. The computation of national social security and pension/benefit fund contributions for personal pension schemes and occupational pension schemes
3. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

F Value added tax

1. The scope of value added tax (VAT)
2. The VAT registration requirements
3. The computation of VAT liabilities
4. Administration of VAT and penalties for non-compliance

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6. Detailed study guide

A The Zimbabwe tax system and its administration

1. Zimbabwe taxes

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

b) Summarise the different types of capital and revenue taxes.[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 Zimbabwe tax system.[1]

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

c) Compare and contrast tax avoidance and tax evasion.[1]

d) Assess the interaction of the Zimbabwe tax system with that of other tax jurisdictions.[2]

3. The systems for self-assessment, the making of returns, submission of information, claims and the procedures relating to enquiries, objections, appeals and disputes

a) Analyse the features of the self-assessment system and apply to individuals and companies.[2]

b) Apply the time limits to taxpayer registration, the filing of returns and the making of claims.[2]

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

d) Analyse the circumstances in which ZIMRA can enquire into a tax return.[2]

e) Analyse the procedures for dealing with appeals/objections and disputes.[2]

B Income tax liabilities

1. The scope of income tax

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

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.[2]

c) Calculate the taxable income and tax payable where:[2]

(i) Remuneration is wholly received in local currency.
(ii) Remuneration is wholly received in foreign currency.
(iii) Remuneration is received partly in local currency.

d) Analyse the exemptions and allowable deductions.[2]

e) Calculate the value of taxable benefits.[2]

f) Explain the PAYE system including the final deduction system (FDS).[1]

3. Income from self-employment

a) Assess the basis of assessment for self-employment income.[2]

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

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

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d) Calculate the taxable income on commencement and on cessation.[2]

e) Capital allowances:

(i) Explain what constitutes plant and machinery for capital allowances purposes.[1]
(ii) Calculate annual wear and tear (reducing balance method) allowances and special initial allowances.[2]
(iii) Calculate capital allowances for commercial and passenger motor vehicles.[2]
(iv) Calculate the recoupment of capital allowances on an asset's disposal.[2]
(v) Explain what constitutes an industrial building and a commercial building for capital allowance purposes.[1]
(vi) Calculate industrial building allowance and commercial buildings allowance for new and second-hand buildings.[2]

f) Incentive allowances:

(i) Summarise the available incentive allowances.[1]
(ii) Calculate incentive allowances.[2]

g) Relief for trading losses:

(i) Analyse how trading losses can be carried forward.[2]
(ii) Analyse how trading losses can be claimed against total trading income.[2]
(iii) Analyse the relief for trading losses in the early years of a trade.[2]
(iv) Analyse how trading losses can be carried forward following the incorporation of a business.[2]

h) Farmers:

(i) Apply standard values to the valuation of stock.[2]
(ii) Analyse the special deductions available to farmers.[2]
(iii) Calculate farming taxable income.[2]
(iv) Analyse how relief for farming losses is given.[2]

i) Partnerships:

(i) Analyse how a partnership is assessed to tax.[2]
(ii) Calculate the taxable income for each partner following a change in the profit-sharing ratio or a change in the membership of the partnership.[2]
(iii) Analyse the loss relief claims that are available to partners.[2]

4. Property and investment income

a) Calculate property business taxable income.[2]

b) Calculate the taxation of premiums receivable/payable in conjunction to a lease.[2]

c) Analyse how property and investment business losses can be carried forward.[2]

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

e) Compare exempt and taxable interest 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 people aged 55 and above.[2]

c) Calculate the amount of income tax payable (including AIDS levy).[2]

d) Assess and calculate the amount of applicable tax credits.[2]

e) Assess and apply the treatment of donations. [2]

f) Assess and apply the treatment of income received from property owned jointly by a married couple.[2]

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g) Assess and apply the exemptions and reliefs in deferring and minimising income tax liabilities.[2]

h) Analyse and calculate the expenditure which is allowable in calculating taxable income.[2]

i) Assess and apply the exemptions from and reductions in tax payable available to taxpayers in industrial parks, under BOOT or BOT arrangements, in special economic zones as licensed investors and in approved tourist development zones.[2]

j) Calculate double taxation relief for withholding tax and underlying tax.[2]

6. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

a) Apply the quarterly payment date system (QPDs) to self-employed individuals.[2]

b) Assess the obligation to withhold tax at source when making payments to both residents and non-residents.[2]

c) Apply the due dates for the payment of tax under the assessment system.[2]

d) Calculate provisional and quarterly payments of tax, including where income is received solely or partly in foreign currency.[2]

e) Calculate interest on overdue tax.[2]

f) Apply the penalties that can be charged.[2]

C Corporation tax liabilities

1. The scope of corporation tax

a) Contrast the terms 'period of account', 'accounting period', and 'year of assessment'.[2]

b) Apply the rules to determine when an accounting period starts and when an accounting period finishes.[2]

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

2. Profits chargeable to corporation tax

a) Analyse gross income.[2]

b) Analyse the expenditure that is allowable in calculating taxable business income.[2]

c) Assess and apply the relief which can be obtained for pre-trading expenditure.[2]

d) Calculate capital allowances (as for individual/personal income tax).[2]

e) Calculate investment incentives (as for individual/personal income tax).[2]

f) Calculate property business taxable income and understand how relief for a property business loss is given.[2]

g) Calculate taxable income from farming operations (as for individual/personal income tax).[2]

h) Analyse how assessed trading losses can be carried forward.[2]

i) Analyse how assessed trading losses can be claimed against income of the current accounting periods.[2]

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

k) Assess and apply the treatment of interest paid and received.[2]

l) Assess and apply the treatment of donations.[2]

m) Calculate the taxable income chargeable to corporation tax.[2]

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3. The comprehensive computation of corporation tax liability

a) Calculate the corporation tax liability (including AIDS levy).[2]

b) Assess and calculate the amount of applicable tax credits.[2]

c) Assess and apply the exemptions from and reductions in tax payable available to taxpayers in industrial parks, under BOOT or BOT arrangements, in special economic zones as licensed investors and in approved tourist development zones.[2]

d) Assess and apply the exemptions and reliefs in deferring and minimising corporation tax liabilities.[2]

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

a) Assess and apply the relief available for transfers of assets between companies under common control.[2]

b) Calculate double taxation relief for withholding tax and underlying tax.[2]

c) Assess and apply the basic principles of the transfer pricing rules.[2]

5. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

a) Apply the quarterly payment date system (QPD's) as it applies to companies.[2]

b) Assess and apply the obligation to withhold tax at source when making payments to both residents and non-residents.[2]

c) Apply the due dates for the payment of tax under the assessment system.[2]

d) Calculate provisional and quarterly payments of tax, including where income is received solely or partly in foreign currency.[2]

e) Calculate interest on overdue tax.[2]

f) Apply the penalties that can be charged.[2]

D Capital gains

1. The scope of the taxation of capital gains

a) Explain the scope of capital gains tax.[1]

b) Explain which assets and persons are exempt.[1]

2. The principles of computing gains and losses

a) Calculate capital gains on disposal of specified assets for both individuals and companies.[2]

b) Assess and apply deductible expenditure, including adjustment for inflation.[2]

c) Assess and apply the treatment of capital losses for both individuals and companies.[2]

d) Assess and apply the treatment of transfers between a husband and wife.[2]

e) Calculate the amount of allowable expenditure for a part disposal.[2]

f) Analyse the treatment where an asset is damaged, lost or destroyed, and the implications of receiving insurance proceeds and reinvesting such proceeds.[2]

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3. Gains and losses on the disposal of immovable property and marketable securities

a) Calculate the relief available when a principal private residence is disposed of between related parties.[2]

b) Calculate the capital gain when a principal private residence has been used for business purposes.[2]

c) Calculate the value of quoted shares where they are disposed of by way of a gift.[2]

d) Apply the treatment of bonus issues, rights issues, takeovers and reorganisations.[2]

4. The computation of capital gains tax and the use of exemptions and reliefs

a) Calculate the amount of capital gains tax payable.[2]

b) Assess and apply rollover relief as it applies to individuals and companies.[2]

c) Assess and apply the relief that is available upon the transfer of assets by an individual to a company which they control.[2]

d) Assess and apply the relief available for transfers of assets between companies under common control.[2]

e) Assess and apply the relief available where the purchase price is paid by instalments.[2]

5. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

a) Assess and apply capital gains withholding tax.[2]

b) Apply the due dates for the payment of tax under the assessment system.[2]

c) Calculate interest on overdue tax.[2]

d) Apply the penalties that can be charged.[2]

E National social security and pension/benefit fund contributions

1. The scope of the national social security system

a) Explain the scope of pension/benefit fund and national social security contributions.[1]

2. The computation of national social security and pension/benefit fund contributions for personal pension schemes and occupational pension schemes

a) Calculate the contributions payable by employed persons.[2]

b) Calculate the contributions payable by self-employed persons.[2]

c) Calculate the allowable contributions payable by employers.[2]

d) Calculate the allowable contributions payable by employed persons.[2]

e) Calculate the allowable contributions payable by self-employed persons.[2]

3. The time limits including payments on account and penalties for non-compliance

a) Apply the due dates for the payment of the monthly contributions.[2]

b) Calculate interest on overdue contributions.[2]

c) Apply the penalties which can be charged.[2]

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F Value added tax

1. The scope of value added tax (VAT)

a) Explain the scope of VAT.[1]

b) Summarise the principal zero-rated and exempt supplies.[1]

2. The VAT registration requirements

a) Assess the circumstances in which a person must register or deregister for VAT.[2]

b) Analyse the advantages of voluntary VAT registration.[2]

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

d) Explain the four categories of tax period.[1]

3. The computation of VAT liabilities

a) Calculate the amount of VAT 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) Analyse and apply the circumstances in which input VAT is non-deductible.[2]

e) Analyse and apply the relief that is available for impairment losses on trade debts.[2]

f) Analyse and apply the treatment of imports and exports of goods and services.[2]

g) Summarise the information that must be given on a fiscal tax invoice.[1]

3. Administration of VAT and penalties for non-compliance

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

b) Calculate interest on overdue tax.[2]

c) Explain the penalties that can be charged.[1]

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7. Approach to examining the syllabus

The syllabus for E1 Taxation (E1 ZWE) 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 income tax (syllabus area B) and corporation 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.

8. 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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9. 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 ZWE, generally examinations in June and December will be based on legislation passed 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.

10. 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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