



Operational level examination blueprint

Incorporating Operational Case Study
Examination, E1, P1 and F1 Objective Tests

Objective tests from November 2019 to January 2021

Case study examinations in February, May, August,
November 2020 and February 2021

Publication date: 31 January 2019

Introduction

Blueprints for the future

In a rapidly digitising ecosystem the competencies expected from finance professionals are radically different. CIMA has been at the forefront of equipping finance professionals with the aptitude and the attitude that drive businesses forward. And with the 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification, we seek to give learners the skill set and the mindset to be resilient and ready for the future.

Passing each of the three levels of the CIMA Professional Qualification is the litmus test against which employers evaluate a candidate's capabilities to drive organisational success.

For the first time, CIMA is releasing blueprints for its Professional Qualification Examination. The blueprints will demystify the examination — giving greater clarity on examinable topics; assessment approach, design and weightings; and learner expectations. The blueprints won't just aid learners taking the examination, but will also orientate learning partners and employers about the judging parameters and the capabilities of finance professionals for tomorrow.

The purpose — setting expectations

The examination blueprints give learners the clearest expression of what is expected of them in the CIMA Professional Qualification Examinations. It tells learners what to prepare for and how to prepare for the Case Study Examinations and the Objective Tests. Working in tandem with the syllabus document, it aids the learner in anticipating the type of questions to expect in the examination.

Along with explaining the Examinations' key features, it lists the competencies, skills and knowledge necessary to pass the Case Study Examination and Objective Tests; appraises educators about the knowledge and skills needed to pass the examination; aligns employers with the capabilities of the candidates; and, above all helps us keep the examinations current, relevant and up to date with the latest standards.

As our most comprehensive statement to date on CIMA Professional Qualification Examinations, one of the core purposes of the blueprints is to assist learners in getting into the mindset the examination demands.

Improving employability — now and in the future

The purpose behind the updated 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification is to ensure the relevance of the finance professional. In a business environment where digitisation is reshaping and reimagining more and more roles, we are looking to build capabilities, enhance competencies, drive the employability and add to the confidence of a CIMA qualified finance professional.

At the Operational level, learners are expected to perform the functions of an Entry level finance professional. Companies expect finance professionals at this level to be able to leverage data and technology to breakdown medium-term decisions into short-term actionable plans. This blueprint will orient learners with these expectations and prepare them for their real-life roles.

The 'I Can' statements, which reflect the competencies of a learner at the end of a Case Study Examination and the representative task statements that emerge from the successful completion of Objective Tests — correspond directly with what employers are looking for and businesses need to transform and thrive.

Arriving at the blueprint

As automation and digital platforms take over and reshape some of the core finance functions, we wanted to understand the future of the profession. We set out on a year-long research – consulting with finance professionals across the world to learn what the future of finance looks like and, more importantly, what businesses need to thrive.

In a digitally disrupted business environment, it's even more important that finance professionals shift their focus from foundational and intermediate proficiency level, to applying a higher-level expertise. The 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification is a result of these research findings and has been designed to drive employability and continued growth.

The CIMA Professional Qualification is made up of three levels – Operational, Management and Strategic. Each level imparts the knowledge and business acumen that's expected from a finance professional working at an entry level, managerial level or at a senior leadership level.

At the end of each level, learners have to take a Case Study Examination – a business simulation of real-life job tasks that someone at that level is expected to perform. In addition, the purpose of the Case Study Examination is to assess the candidate's proficiency in those specific skills that are less likely to be automated. The Case Study Examination blueprints articulate the business simulation through the core activities and assessment outcomes. The Objective Test blueprints state the job tasks through the representative task statements. As a result, learners are clear about the basis for each type of assessment.

Getting the skill sets and the mindset that matter

The fundamentals and the skills acquired through each subject will be tested in the Objective Tests. Questions can be asked across the whole breadth of the Syllabus and the tests are weighted based on remembering, understanding and application with some analysis and evaluation in highly structured scenarios. Learners must pass the Objective Tests to move on to the Case Study Examination.

While the Objective Tests check that learners have the best knowledge and skill set to tackle a situation, what's equally important is having the right attitude and mindset to affect and influence decisions, actions and behaviours. The Case Study Examination gives learners ample opportunities to demonstrate these traits and an awareness and understanding of their simulated organisation and the ecosystem in which it operates. To be successful in the examination – and by extension in the real world of work – a learner is also required to demonstrate qualities and competencies such as leadership, professional judgement and ethical awareness.

The Case Study Examination – demonstrating the aptitude and the attitude

The Case Study Examination tests the knowledge, skills and techniques from the three pillars within one simulated scenario and is taken at the end of each level of the CIMA Professional Qualification. Candidates are given a fictional Case Study before the examination and are expected to give solutions to the situations and challenges presented within the examination – based on the knowledge and skills acquired from the three subjects. The Case Study mimics their role in a real-work scenario, at each level of the qualification.

The blueprint of the Operational Case Study Examination gives the learner the first experience of the tasks they will be expected to accomplish through a simulated job scenario. The role simulated is that of an Entry level finance professional.

Driving employability through simulation

Case Study materials are provided well in advance of the actual examination so that learners can immerse themselves into its context. The pre-seen materials provide an opportunity for learners to consider their previous studies in the context of the workplace and explore the links between the individual subjects as part of their research and preparation for the Case Study Examination. The Case Study Examination presents challenges and situations that a finance professional will encounter and employers have identified as critical at that level.

The individual subjects in the Operational level of the CIMA Professional Qualification and the blueprints have been designed to make learners ready for the business world and be productive from day one. The Operational level Case Study Examination focuses and assesses the candidate on six core activities – that an Entry level finance professional is expected to perform frequently. At this level, they are expected to draw on their technical skills to collect and interpret data, generate insights and advise stakeholders in decision-making. Their capability to do so is reflected in the 'I Can' statements and tells employers about their competencies.

The CIMA Professional Qualification Examination Blueprints are pointers to the direction the future of finance will take. With the needs of the employer and the needs of a digitising business landscape at its core, the 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification seeks to build capabilities, future-proof skills, improve employability and create finance professionals who will be navigators of disruption. It is yet another step from CIMA to help and partner you in leading the transformation – go beyond limits, beyond insights and beyond expectations.

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Outline

This is the examination blueprint for the Operational level of the CIMA Professional Qualification. It will set out in detail what is examinable in the Case Study Examination and the Objective Tests for the period stated on the cover of this document. It also provides information about the format, structure and weightings of the assessments. It complements the syllabus document and provides details specifically related to the different type of assessments and is our most comprehensive statement to date on CIMA's examinations.

The purpose of the examination blueprint is to:

- ▶ Explain the key features of the examination.
- ▶ Describe how the examination was developed in consultation with employers.
- ▶ Document the competencies, skills and knowledge necessary to pass the Case Study Examination.
- ▶ Assist learners in preparing for the examination
- ▶ Apprise educators about the knowledge and skills learners will need to pass the examination.
- ▶ Apprise employers of what passing learners can do.
- ▶ Guide the development of examination tasks and questions.

This blueprint focuses on the examinable content and assessment structure for the Operational level Case Study Examination and Objective Tests for:

- ▶ E1: Managing Finance in a Digital World
- ▶ P1: Management Accounting
- ▶ F1: Financial Reporting

You can take a look at the blueprints for the Management and Strategic level at cimaglobal.com/examblueprints

For more information on the operational and administrative aspects of the examination please refer to cimaglobal.com.

Effective dates and examinable standards

The blueprint is based on the 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification Syllabus and will be examined for the first time in November 2019 with the Objective Tests and in February 2020 with the Case Study Examinations.

Examination period covered

Objective tests from November 2019 to January 2021

Case study examinations in February, May, August, November 2020 and February 2021

This is the first release of the examination blueprint for the 2019 Professional Qualification Syllabus. Any updates to the blueprint document in future publications will be detailed here.

Version number	Date first published	Summary of changes
1	31 January 2019	N/A
1.1	30 August 2019	Page 34 – P1 removal of task statement calculate subdivision of total usage/efficiency variances into mix and yield variances. Page 46 – P1 delete bullet point 'Learning Curve'. Other minor weblink updates.

International Accounting Standards and Exposure Drafts

The examination will be set in accordance with relevant International Accounting Standards and International Financial Reporting Standards. This also applies to the material relating to Financial Reporting Exposure Drafts.

As a general rule, CIMA will examine such standards from the effective date. Details of specific standards that are examinable for the period covered by this blueprint document will be clearly stated in the Objective Tests blueprints below.

For Case Study Examinations, where individual standards will not normally be directly assessed and where marking can accommodate a variety of approaches, learners may refer to new standards before the effective date where early adoption is permitted.

Developing the exam blueprints

With new technology and digital platforms playing a greater role in the way businesses and their finance function operate, we wanted to identify the future direction of the finance function. The year-long research spanning 150 countries featuring over 5,500 finance professionals in 200 organisations opened-up insights into the future of finance and more crucially an understanding of the future needs of businesses and employers globally. The 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification is rooted in this research and its findings. The updated syllabus sets out the body of knowledge, skills and techniques that employers and organisations value and need.

By collaborating with learning partners, test design experts and psychometricians, we translated the syllabus content into core activities, assessment outcomes and representative task statements. Based on this, we produced the draft blueprints that provides a clearer direction on the approach to be taken in examinations.

We discussed the draft with learning providers and key stakeholders and as a final step surveyed CIMA members worldwide to validate the draft and to inform the final decisions about the blueprints and examination design such as weightings.

These extensive discussions and multiple layers of consultations ensured that what is included and emphasised are indeed the knowledge, skills and techniques that are most in-demand with employers. At the heart of it, both the syllabus and the blueprints work together to drive employability and organisational performance.

The blueprints will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure CIMA's Examinations remain focussed on the skills that organisations most value in their finance professionals.

You can get the PDF with the full details of the research, here: [*Accounting in extraordinary times: the future of finance*](#)

Operational level examination — An overview

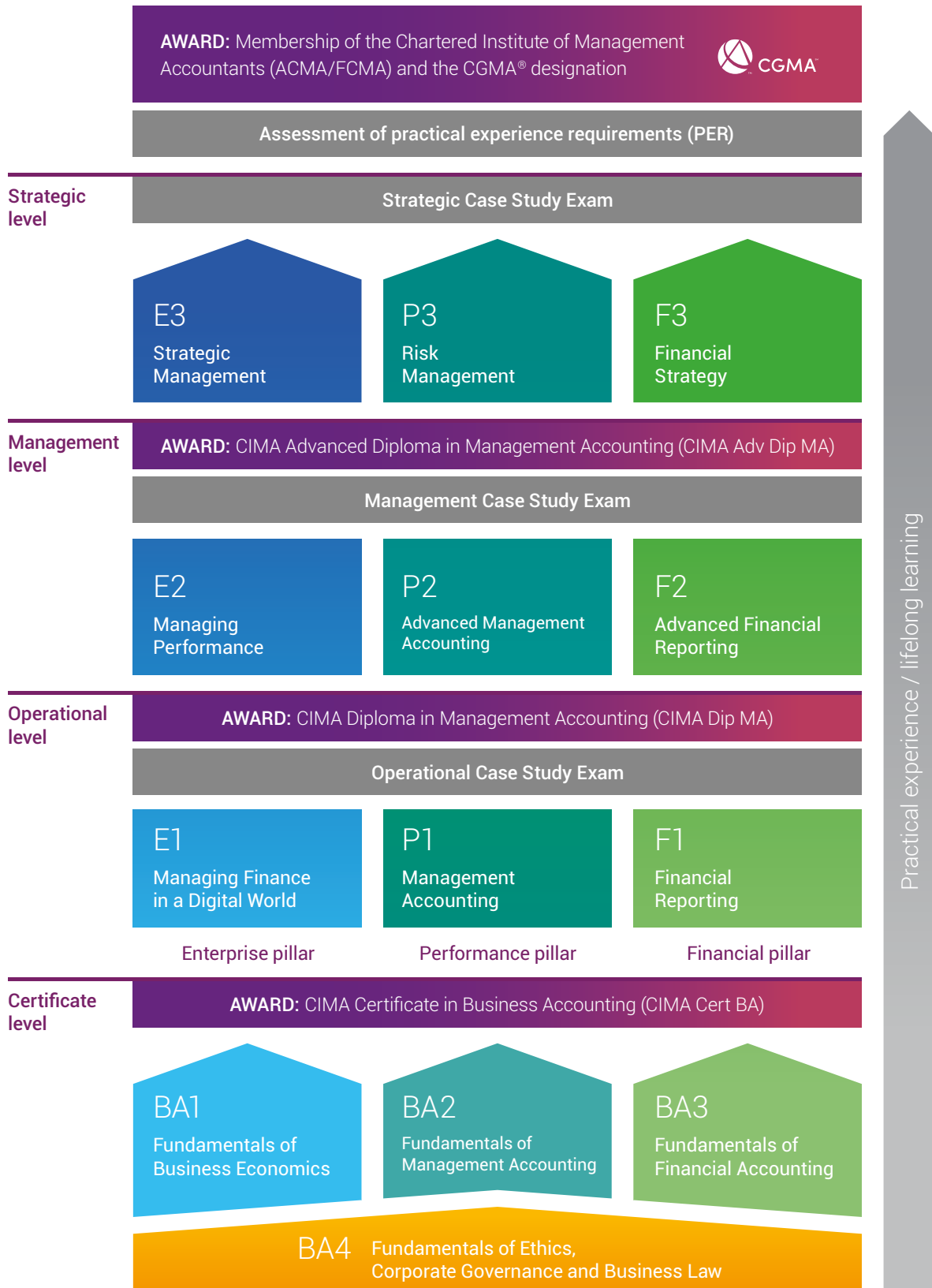
The CIMA Professional Qualification

Our overriding objective in designing the CIMA Professional Qualification is to enhance the employability of learners and members by creating a learning system that enables them to acquire skills, competencies and the mindset that are in high demand with employers. This is more important than ever, keeping in mind the increasing pace of change and traditional roles being redefined by technology and digital advances.

The CIMA Professional Qualification is divided into three levels — Operational, Management and Strategic. Each of these levels consists of three pillars of domain knowledge — Enterprise, Performance and Financial. Passing each level of the qualification confirms a candidate's capabilities to perform the tasks at that level in the workplace to the highest standards. When combined with the required practical experience, the

CIMA Professional Qualification ensures that members are ready to support and lead their organisations, through the challenging environment of continuous change. The syllabus, assessments and practical experience requirements ensure members are not only competent in the essential accounting, finance and business-related skills, but also in the skills required to lead the finance function in a digital age.

The Operational level focuses on the short term and the implementation of decisions. Learners will be able to work with others in the organisation and use appropriate data and technology to translate medium-term decisions into short-term actionable plans.



CIMA's approach to assessment

Each level of the CIMA Professional Qualification culminates in a Case Study Examination, which integrates the knowledge, skills and techniques from across the three pillars into one synoptic capstone examination. The Case Study Examination is a role simulation. It requires candidates to perform authentic work-based activities presented during the course of the examination, drawing together learning from each of the three subjects to provide solutions to the issues and challenges asked. Case Study material is provided in advance, so that learners can immerse themselves in the fictional organisation and industry for the simulation and can analyse the organisation's current position prior to the examination.

The Case Study Examination, at each level, simulates the job role linked to the level and focusses on the core activities which employers expect competent individuals in those roles to perform.

Objective Tests for each of the individual subjects ensure the acquisition of the breadth of knowledge, skills and techniques which provide the foundation for approaching the Case Study Examination.

Operational Case Study Examination

At the Operational level, the role simulated is that of an Entry level finance professional and the capstone Case Study Examination provides a simulated context, which allows candidates to demonstrate that they have acquired the required knowledge, skills, techniques and mindset for that role.

The Operational Case Study Examination is the first role simulation that learners encounter when studying for the CIMA Professional Qualification. Passing the Operational Case Study Examination leads to the award of the CIMA Diploma in Management Accounting and candidates can then progress to the Management level.

Operational level Objective Tests

The Operational Case Study Examination is underpinned by three Objective Tests, one for each of the professional qualification subjects. The Case Study Examination can be attempted only after all Objective Tests for the level have been completed or if exemptions have been given.

Within each level, learners are free to study and take Objective Tests in any order they wish. CIMA's suggested order of study is to begin with the Enterprise pillar subject, then move to the Performance pillar subject and then to the Financial pillar subject. The qualification has been designed so that, at each level, the Enterprise pillar gives the broad context in which the Performance and Finance pillars operate. The Performance pillar provides the context of what Management Accountants do within an organisation and the Finance pillar considers the reporting and the implications of this activity. It is for these reasons that this order is suggested.

For example, CIMA would recommend learners studying the Operational Level to start with E1, then move to P1 and then to F1 before sitting the Operational Case Study Examination.

Assessing skills

CIMA has adopted a skill framework for the assessments based on the revised Bloom's Taxonomy of Education Objectives. Bloom's Taxonomy classifies a continuum of skills that learners are expected to know and demonstrate.

Footnote:

Bloom's taxonomy

Revised taxonomy see Anderson, L.W. (Ed.), Krathwohl, D.R. (Ed.), Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M.C. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Complete Edition)*. New York: Longman. For original taxonomy see Bloom, B.S. (Ed.), Engelhart, M.D., Furst, E.J., Hill, W.H., & Krathwohl, D.R. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook 1: Cognitive domain*. New York: David McKay.

Skill levels and verbs

The following table details the verbs included in the blueprints for both Objective Tests and Case Study

Examinations and maps these to the four skill levels that will be used for the purposes of assessment:

Skill level		Verbs used	Definition
Level 5	Evaluation The examination or assessment of problems and use of judgement to draw conclusions	Advise Assess Evaluate Recommend Review Select	Counsel, inform or notify Evaluate or estimate the nature, ability or quality of Appraise or assess the value of Propose a course of action Assess and evaluate in order, to change if necessary Choose an option or course of action after consideration of the alternatives
Level 4	Analysis The examination and study of the interrelationships of separate areas in order to identify causes and find evidence to support inferences	Align Analyse Communicate Compare and contrast Develop Discuss Examine Monitor Prioritise Produce	Arrange in an orderly way Examine in detail the structure of Share or exchange information Show the similarities and/or differences between Grow and expand a concept Examine in detail by argument Inspect thoroughly Observe and check the progress of Place in order of priority or sequence for action Create or bring into existence
Level 3	Application The use or demonstration of knowledge, concepts or techniques	Apply Calculate Conduct Demonstrate Determine Perform Prepare Reconcile Record Use	Put to practical use Ascertain or reckon mathematically Organise and carry out Prove with certainty or exhibit by practical means Ascertain or establish exactly by research or calculation Carry out, accomplish, or fulfil Make or get ready for use Make or prove consistent/compatible Keep a permanent account of facts, events or transactions Apply a technique or concept
Level 1/2	Remembering and understanding The perception and comprehension of the significance of an area utilising knowledge gained	Define Describe Distinguish Explain Identify Illustrate List Recognise State Outline Understand	Give the exact meaning of Communicate the key features of Highlight the differences between Make clear or intelligible/state the meaning or purpose of Recognise, establish or select after consideration Use an example to describe or explain something Make a list of Identify/recall Express, fully or clearly, the details/facts of Give a summary of Comprehend ideas, concepts and techniques

Simulating the role of the Entry level finance professional – The Operational Case Study examination

Examination purpose

The CIMA Case Study Examinations are capstone examinations designed to demonstrate mastery of previously acquired knowledge, skills and techniques and the drawing together of these to provide solutions to unstructured problems. By their position and design they are synoptic.

Each synoptic assessment combines the content covered in the three pillar subjects at the level into a single assessment. Its aim is the “undoing” of the pillar and subject divisions of the syllabus and the application of knowledge, skills and techniques together with the mindset of a CIMA finance professional. It challenges learners to provide solutions to the type of problems that they would encounter in the workplace for the job role matched to the level of the professional qualification.

The examination uses a simulated Case Study to provide a rich, immersive scenario to prepare and to provide a context for the tasks in the examination. The scenarios are developed around today's modern business environment and the challenges that candidates will face – allowing them to demonstrate the core activities that have been identified by employers as critical.

Examination tasks will be practical and applied, not theoretical or academic. To be successful, candidates will have to perform the core activities in the same way and to the same standards that would be valid and valued in the workplace.

The simulation

The simulation is made up of three broad parts:

- ▶ The role of finance
- ▶ The role simulated
- ▶ The job tasks simulated

The simulation will require learners to demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge, skills and mindset of the CIMA finance professional along with an appreciation of the impact of the features of the simulation (the context, organisational structures and environment and ecosystem within which the organisation operates).

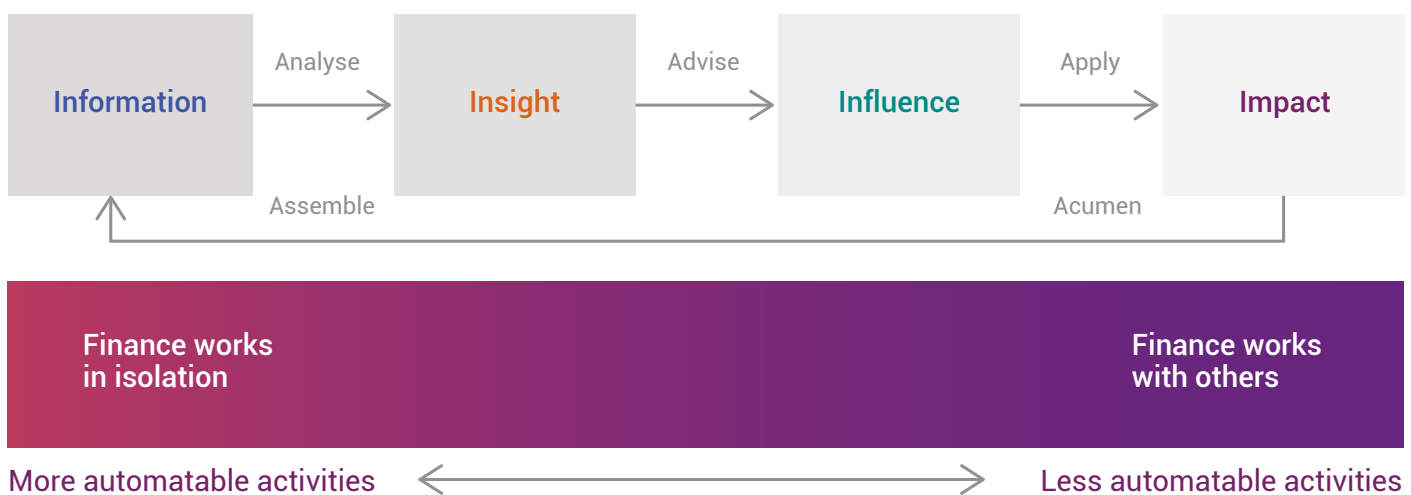
Simulating the role of the finance function

The finance function has a mandate to go beyond its core historical accounting role. This changing mandate doesn't discard core accounting; it's still an essential foundation of the finance function. However, enabled by new technologies, the function is now capable of assessing a broader range of information and is becoming a more influential player within an organisation.

At the heart of the finance function are basic activities – the function's DNA. Whether you are assessing finance risk, reconciling accounts or compiling management information reports, the process activities remain constant.

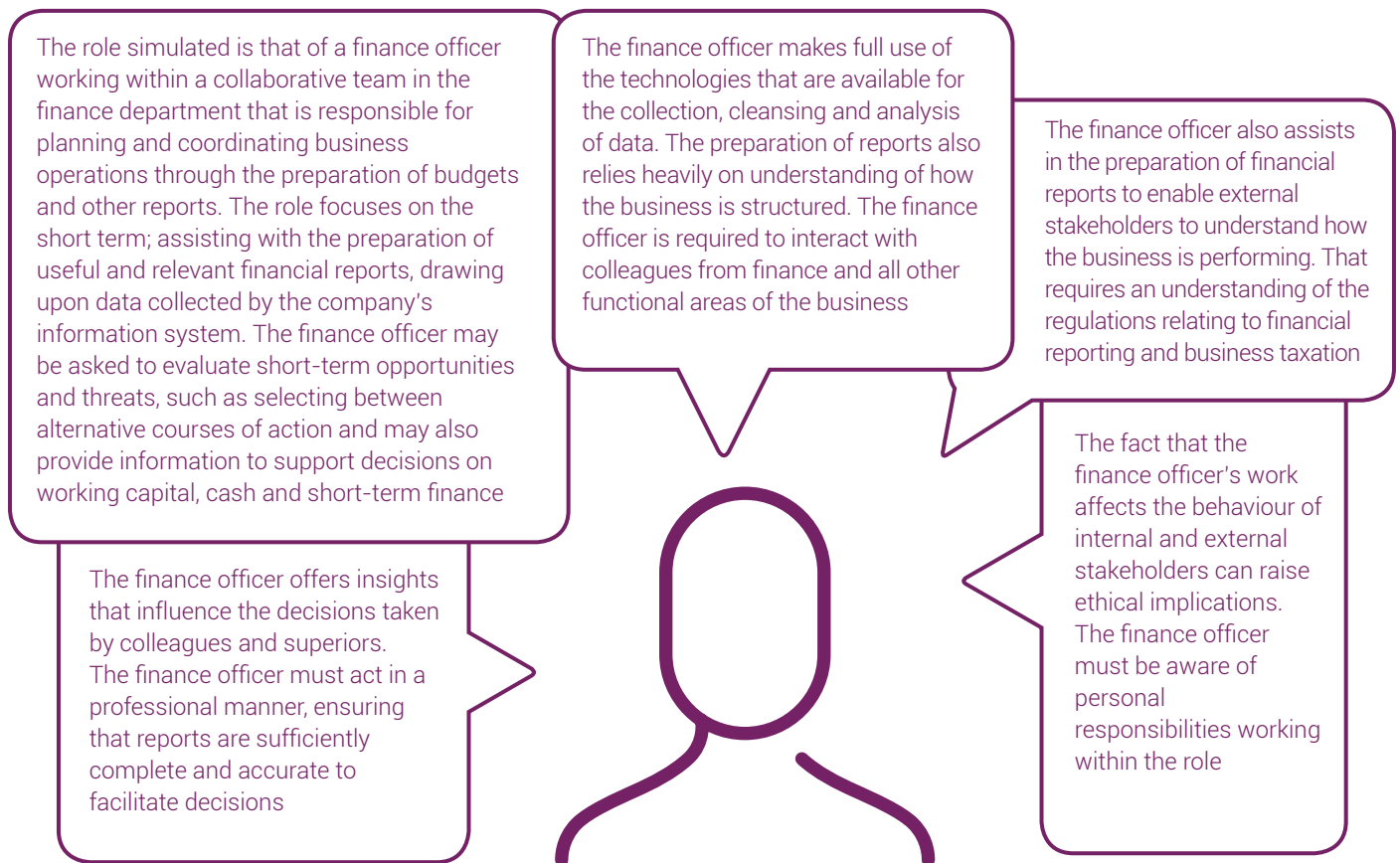
At all levels of the CIMA qualification, learners are expected to create information, insight, influence and impact. However, the scope, reach and the nature of this activity varies by level and is defined in the role simulation and by the core activities defined for that role.

Figure 1: Basic finance activities from information to impact



Entry level finance professional – simulating the role

The role simulated is that of an entry level finance professional (sometimes known as a finance officer or a staff accountant).



Entry level finance professional – simulating the job tasks

Within each Operational Case Study Examination, six core activities will be assessed. These core activities represent the tasks that are most frequent, critical and important to the Entry level finance professional role.

The six core activities are:

- A. Prepare costing information for different purposes to meet the needs of management.
- B. Prepare budget information and assess its use for planning and control purposes.
- C. Analyse performance using financial and non-financial information.
- D. Apply relevant financial reporting standards and corporate governance, ethical and tax principles.
- E. Prepare information to support short-term decision-making.
- F. Prepare information to manage working capital.

The core activities are linked to associated assessment outcomes expressed in terms of 'I Can' statements that speak directly to the skills and competencies that drive the employability of successful learners.

Entry level finance professional – mindset of the CIMA finance professional

The Case Study Examination allows the opportunity to demonstrate technical knowledge applied to a scenario. But in order to respond fully to the given scenario and problems to add value to the simulated organisation, candidates will need to ensure that they have the attitude and mindset to affect and influence their own decisions, actions and behaviours and those of others within the organisation. They must also have an awareness of the environment in which the organisation is operating and the increasingly digital ecosystem.

Enabling qualities and competencies such as communication, professional scepticism, leadership, professional judgement, ethical awareness and business acumen are critical to performing well in the examination tasks as well as the workplace.

The core activities require and draw together the knowledge, skills and techniques acquired while studying for Objective Tests and combining them with the mindset of a CIMA finance professional. The pre-seen material and information provided during the course of the Case Study Examination provides a rich simulation which enables the learner to demonstrate the acquisition of these and their overall competency in the role.

Understanding the blueprint

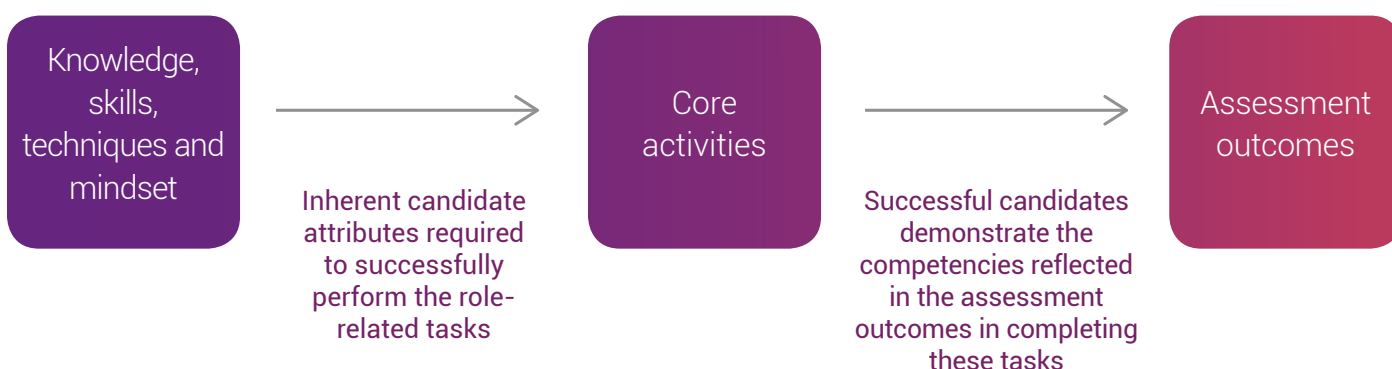
The Case Study Examination blueprint articulates the synoptic relationships across the three pillars for the level. Its core activities are integrated and multidisciplinary. By completing the core activities, successful candidates will implicitly demonstrate not just the technical abilities but all the required competencies and the mindset for that level.

As detailed above, the Case Study Examination blueprint contains the following:

- ▶ Core activities – Business-related tasks that are common to the role being simulated and valued by employers which, if performed satisfactorily, enables the demonstration of the assessment outcomes.

- ▶ Assessment outcome – A clear assertion of what a CIMA qualified finance professional can do when the Examination has been completed and what the assessment will be designed to measure. Case Study assessment outcomes will be synoptic.

A weighting range is given for each core activity. This represents the amount of time that will be allocated to each core activity in the examination.



Operational Case Study Examination blueprint

Core activity	Assessment outcome	Weighting
A. Prepare costing information for different purposes to meet the needs of management	<p>I can use appropriate technologies to gather data for costing purposes, from digital and other sources.</p> <p>I can apply different costing methods to produce costing information suitable for managers' needs.</p> <p>I can explain costing information to operational and senior management using appropriate formats and media.</p> <p>I can compare different costing methods and systems to determine the most suitable for use by the organisation for different purposes.</p> <p>I can identify the cost information required for digital cost objects.</p>	12–18%
B. Prepare budget information and assess its use for planning and control purposes	<p>I can use appropriate technologies to gather data from digital and other sources to co-ordinate budget preparation.</p> <p>I can explain and use different forecasting methods to assist in budget preparation.</p> <p>I can use different approaches to produce information for use by managers when preparing budgets.</p> <p>I can explain budget information to managers using appropriate formats and media.</p> <p>I can apply various techniques to determine the effect on budgets of changes to variables.</p> <p>I can explain to functional managers how budgets are used for planning and control purposes.</p> <p>I can discuss the behavioural implications of budgetary planning and control.</p> <p>I can compare alternative approaches to budgeting to determine their suitability for the organisation and for different purposes.</p>	17–25%
C. Analyse performance using financial and non-financial information	<p>I can identify information that can enable managers to review performance.</p> <p>I can interpret variances to review functional and organisational performance.</p> <p>I can identify appropriate KPIs for different functions of the organisation.</p> <p>I can explain company performance using KPIs.</p> <p>I can prepare performance reports for use by different functions and for different purposes in appropriate formats and media.</p>	17–25%

Core activity	Assessment outcome	Weighting
D. Apply relevant financial reporting standards and corporate governance, ethical and tax principles	I can apply relevant IFRS in a given context, to facilitate the preparation of financial statements.	12–18%
	I can apply the principles of corporate governance and ethics.	
	I can identify the impact of tax regulation on transactions, decisions and profits.	
E. Prepare information to support short-term decision-making	I can identify relevant costs and benefits.	17–25%
	I can apply appropriate techniques that support short-term decision-making.	
	I can prepare information to support operational decisions.	
	I can explain factors that could influence short-term decisions.	
	I can apply appropriate techniques to deal with situations where there is risk and uncertainty.	
F. Prepare information to manage working capital	I can identify appropriate sources of short-term finance and methods of short-term investments.	7–13%
	I can explain how to manage and control working capital.	
	I can explain working capital ratios in comparison to prior periods or to other organisations.	
	I can identify the impact of changing working capital policies.	

Examination approach

Structure and format

The examination is three hours long. A 15-minute tutorial is available before the start of the examination to allow candidates to familiarise themselves with the test driver.

The examination has four sections (tasks), which are each 45 minutes long. All sections are equally weighted. Candidates may finish a section early and move on to the next but cannot return to previous sections in the time remaining.

There may be more than one sub-task within each section and an indication of how long to spend on each sub-task will be given to allow candidates to manage their time. If no weighting is given, then candidates should assume that the sub-tasks are equally weighted.

More than one core activity will normally be assessed in each section/task and the order of core activities and assessment outcomes in the blueprint does not reflect how these might be structured in the examination.

All core activities will be assessed in each form of the examination in line with the weightings. A sample of related assessment outcomes will be tested.

Item types

The examination requires constructed, written responses from candidates in the format of a range of business communications (for example, emails, memos, reports, briefing notes).

Word processing capabilities will be provided within the test driver to allow the formatting and presentation of responses in a professional manner. From 2019, this will include the ability to use tables to put together a response. For full details of the word processing functionality and to try this in advance of the examination, visit [cimaglobal.com/Studying/study-and-resources/Resources-included-in-your-subscription/](https://www.cimaglobal.com/Studying/study-and-resources/Resources-included-in-your-subscription/)

Examination tasks will not be set that require specific calculations. However, candidates should, wherever possible, show how they have used and interpreted data from the pre-seen and the new information presented during the examination and/or undertook analysis or calculations to support their responses.

Reference materials

The mathematical tables that will be included for reference in each Case Study Examination are:

- ▶ Present value table
- ▶ Cumulative present value table
- ▶ Normal distribution table

For details see [Cimaglobal.com/Tables](https://www.cimaglobal.com/Tables)

A copy of the full set of pre-seen material will be available for reference in the test driver throughout the assessment. A calculator is included within the test driver although candidates are permitted to take their own calculators as long as it's a CIMA approved model.

A notepad and pen are provided for planning and workings along with an on-screen scratch pad.

Marking, grading and feedback

The Case Study Examinations are human marked.

The Case Study results will contain the following information:

- ▶ Grade: Pass or fail
- ▶ Scaled score: 0 to 150 with 80 and above being a pass

There is no requirement to obtain a pass or meet a minimum threshold for each core activity.

Feedback on performance against each core activity will be provided so that learners know their areas of weakness for further study.

More information on performance descriptors is available [here](#) from September 2019.

Candidate experience

There are four examination windows per year. For details of upcoming Case Study Examination dates, visit cimaglobal.com

Pre-seen material will be published on the CIMA website ahead of the examination. Candidates must use the material to prepare for the examination, immersing themselves in the simulated scenario and considering the organisation's current position and future strategy.

The examination will take the form of a 'day in the life' of the role being simulated. Candidates will face a series of tasks that relate to one or more of the core activities in the blueprint.

During the course of the examination, new information will be provided at the start of each section (task). In response, candidates will have to consider the new information that's been given, as well as their previous analysis of the pre-seen material.

Results will be available in MyCIMA about six weeks after the examination.

For more information on the operational and administrative aspects of the examination please refer to cimaglobal.com.

Acquiring the knowledge, skills and techniques required of the Entry level finance professional role – Operational Level Objective Tests

Examination purpose

Objective Tests for each of the individual subjects ensure that learners have acquired the fundamental knowledge, skills and techniques for the role that will be simulated in the culminating Case Study Examination.

The Objective Tests will cover all areas of the syllabus and will ensure that learning has taken place across the breadth of the syllabus. Passing the Objective Tests is a pre-requisite for progressing to the capstone Case Study Examination.

The Objective Tests are weighted towards remembering and understanding and application with some analysis and evaluation in highly structured scenarios.

Understanding the blueprint

The blueprint is structured as follows:

- ▶ Exam content sections
- ▶ Lead and component outcomes
- ▶ Representative task statements

A **representative task statement** is a plain English description of what a CIMA finance professional should know and be able to do.

The content and skill level determine the language and verbs used in the representative task.

CIMA will test up to the level of the task statement in the objective test (an objective test question on a particular topic could be set at a lower level than the task statement in the blueprint).

The format of the Objective Test blueprints follows that of the published syllabus for the 2019 CIMA Professional Qualification.

Weightings for content sections are also included in the individual subject blueprints.

Note: The task statements in the blueprint are representative and are not intended to be (nor should they be viewed as) an all-inclusive list of tasks that may be tested in the Examination. It also should be noted that the number of tasks associated with a particular content group or topic is not indicative of the extent such content group, topic or related skill level will be assessed in the test.

Examination blueprints – Objective Tests

E1: Managing Finance in a Digital World

How the finance function is organised.

Content weighting:

Content area	Weighting
A. Role of the finance function	20%
B. Technology in a Digital World	20%
C. Data and Information in a Digital World	20%
D. Shape and structure of the finance function	20%
E. Finance Interacting with the Organisation	20%
	100%

E1A: Role of the Finance Function		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. The roles of the finance function in organisations	a. Enables organisations to create and preserve value	✓				Understand how technology and competition drive the fast changing and unpredictable contexts in which organisations operate.
	b. Shapes how organisations create and preserve value	✓				Understand how the finance function enables, shapes and narrates value creation thorough planning, forecasting, resource allocation, performance management and financial reporting.
	c. Narrates how organisations create and preserve value	✓				Understand the purpose and principles of corporate governance, the ethical responsibilities of the organisation and individuals and ways of achieving corporate social responsibility.
2. The activities that finance professionals perform to fulfil the roles	a. Collates data to prepare information about organisations	✓				Understand how data is collected, cleaned and connected by finance.
	b. Provides insight to users by analysing information	✓				Understand the types of analyses used to produce insights.
	c. Communicates insight to influence users	✓				Understand how finance communicates to influence key stakeholders (audiences, frequency and format).
	d. Supports the implementation of decisions to achieve the desired impact	✓				Understand how finance supports the implementation of decisions to achieve the desired impact.
	e. Connects the different activities that connect to each other	✓				Understand how finance connects the different activities in an organisation.

E1B: Technology in a Digital World		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. Technologies that affect business and finance	a. The key features of the fourth industrial revolution	✓				Understand the key features and dynamics of the fourth industrial revolution.
	b. The key technologies that define and drive the digital world	✓				Understand key technologies and their impact on an organisation including, cloud computing, big data, data analytics, process automation, artificial intelligence, data visualisation, blockchain, internet of things, mobile technologies and 3-D printing.
2. How the finance function uses digital technologies to fulfil its roles	a. Digital technology	✓				Understand key technologies and how the finance function use cloud computing, big data, data analytics, process automation, artificial intelligence, data visualisation, blockchain, internet of things, mobile technologies and 3-D printing.
	b. Digital mindsets	✓				Understand how a digital mindset can transform finance functions, processes and measurement of performance.
	c. Automation and the future of work	✓				Understand the components of the finance function (financial reporting, management accounting, treasury and internal audit) and how they can be affected by the increased use of automation.
	d. Ethics of technology usage	✓				Understand how the increased use of technology impacts ethical considerations including data protection, privacy and overall corporate digital responsibility.
			✓			

E1C: Data and Information in a Digital World		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. Data and the finance function	a. General usage of data in finance	✓				Understand how the finance function can leverage novel technologies and the associated data to improve information used by decision-makers.
	b. Specific usage of data in primary activities of finance	✓				Understand how the finance function can use data and information to assist sales and marketing to better understand customers and developing customer value propositions.
		✓				Understand how the finance function can use data and information to assist operations in enhancing operational efficiency.
		✓				Understand how the finance function can partner with other areas of the organisation to create value from digital assets.
		✓				Understand how the increased use of data impacts ethical considerations including data protection, privacy and overall corporate digital responsibility.
2. Data to create and preserve value for organisations	a. Data strategy and planning	✓				Understand how the feedback that the finance function receives from stakeholders would facilitate future data needs and associated strategy.
	b. Data engineering, extraction and mining	✓				Understand how the process of data extraction, transformation and loading (ETL) systems impacts the use of data in business intelligence (BI) systems, big data analytics and data visualisation.
	c. Data modelling, manipulation and analysis	✓				Understand the finance function's role in data modelling, data manipulation and analysis.
	d. Data and insight communication	✓				Understand the finance function's role in the management of the components of big data including variety, volume, veracity and velocity.
		✓				Understand the finance function's role in creating and maintaining data visualisations for improved communication.

E1D: Shape and Structure of the Finance Function		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. The structure and shape of the finance function	a. Evolution of the shape of the finance function	✓				Understand the contemporary transformation of the finance function in the digital era from roles that generate information to roles that turn information into insight and how finance communicates that insight to decision-makers.
		✓				Understand the different historical organisational configurations and structural dimensions that organisations may adopt.
	b. Shape of the finance function in the digital era	✓				Understand the hierarchical shape of the finance function and how automation could shift the traditional structure to a diamond shape.
		✓				Understand how reconfiguration, shared services, outsourcing, business process re-engineering, relocation, segregation of the finance function and supporting involvement of business partners impacts the finance function.
2. What each level of the finance function does	a. Finance operations	✓				Understand the components of the finance function (financial reporting, management accounting, treasury and internal audit) and how they provide insight to decision makers.
	b. Specialist areas including financial reporting and financial planning and analysis (FP&A)	✓				Understand how the finance function works with FP&A, taxation, project management and project appraisal to provide insight to decision-makers.
	c. Strategic partnering for value	✓				Understand strategic partnering for value and how business partnering can influence an organisation to make appropriate decisions.
	d. Strategic leadership of the finance team	✓				Understand the importance of strategic leadership of the finance functions and the link to having a team with the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience.

E1E: Finance Interacting with the Organisation		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. The finance function's relationship to operations	a. Main role of operations	✓				Understand the main role of operations in the design of products/services and processes and how this relates to operations, supply and the finance function.
	b. Areas of interface with finance	✓				Understand the contribution of operations management to the efficient production and delivery of customer specific goods and services.
		✓				Understand how the relationships within the supply chain can be managed including lean synchronisation, contractual/relational approaches, material requirement planning, quality planning and control, statistical process control, operational improvement, total quality management (TQM), Kaizen, Six Sigma, lean thinking and reverse logistics.
	c. Key performance indicators	✓				Understand how the finance function helps manage operations through the use of key performance indicators.
2. The finance function's relationship to sales and marketing	a. Main role of sales and marketing	✓				Understand the marketing mix (The 7 Ps) and marketing environment including societal, economic, technological, political and legal factors affecting marketing (PESTEL).
		✓				Understand the main techniques of sales and marketing including market research, market segmentation, market targeting and positioning of products, market data gathering techniques and methods of analysis.
	b. Areas of interface with finance	✓				Understand how the finance function interacts with sales and marketing including product development, product/service life cycles and costing.
		✓				Understand the role of Big Data analytics and its use in the marketing process including predicting customer demand, improving the customer experience, monitoring multi-channel transactions and identifying customer preferences.
	c. Key performance indicators	✓				Understand how the finance function helps manage the supply chain through the use of key performance indicators.

E1E: Finance Interacting with the Organisation (cont.)		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
3. The finance function's relationship to human resources	a. Main role of human resources	✓				Understand the HR activities associated with developing employees including recruitment, selection of staff, staff development and training, performance management, the role of incentives and practices related to motivation and reward systems.
	b-c. Areas of interface with finance and key performance indicators	✓				Understand how the finance function interacts with human resources through the use of key performance indicators.
4. The finance function's relationship to IT	a. Main role of IT	✓				Understand the role of information systems in organisations and how IT enables knowledge management between finance, operations, sales and marketing and human resources.
		✓				Understand the ways of organising and managing information systems in the context of the wider organisation including enabling transformation, the emergence of new technology, geographically dispersed teams, enhancing internal and external relationships and ethical and social issues with information systems and data.
		✓				Understand the costs and benefits of information systems including privacy and security, systems architecture, data flows and big data information management.
	b-c. Areas of interface with finance and key performance indicators	✓				Understand how the finance function interacts with IT and the use of key performance indicators.

P1: Management Accounting

What the finance function does.

Content weighting:

Content area	Weighting
A. Cost Accounting for Decision and Control	30%
B. Budgeting and Budgetary Control	25%
C. Short-Term Commercial Decision-making	30%
D. Dealing with Uncertainty in the Short Term	15%
	100%

P1A: Cost accounting for Decision and Control		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. Rationales for costing	a. Definition of costing	✓				Understand costing and the different reasons for calculating costs.
	b. Rationales for costing	✓				Understand the difference between financial accounting and cost accounting.
		✓				Identify inventory costs and period costs.
		✓				Understand how management accounting fits into and supports a business' operations.
		✓				Understand how the cost management and transformation model is designed to help businesses achieve and maintain cost-competitiveness.
		✓				Recognise how management accountants help make tactical business decisions.
2. Costing concepts	a. The main costing elements	✓				Define a cost element and understand how the amount paid for a resource is consumed by an activity and included in a cost object or pool.
		✓				Define a cost object or a cost pool.
		✓				Understand the difference between direct costs and indirect costs.
		✓				Understand the difference between variable costs and fixed costs.
		✓				Define overhead costs.
		✓				Understand the relationship between direct and variable costs and direct and fixed costs.
		✓				Understand the relationship between indirect and variable costs and indirect and fixed costs.
	b. Costing concepts for different organisations and cost objects			✓		
			✓			Determine why product costs are calculated using different methods for different purposes for different types of organisations.

P1A: Cost accounting for Decision and Control (cont.)		Skill level				Representative task statement	
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation		
3. Costing methods	a. Cost accumulation, allocation, apportionment and absorption		✓			Apply marginal (or variable) throughput and absorption accounting methods for profit reporting and inventory valuation, including the reconciliation of budget and actual profit using absorption and/or marginal costing principles.	
	b. Standard costing			✓			Apply standard costing methods including the reconciliation of budgeted and actual profit margins, distinguishing between planning and operational variances.
				✓			Establish manufacturing standards for material, labour, variable overhead and fixed overhead.
				✓			Calculate standards and variances for service industries, public services and manufacturing companies.
				✓			Calculate price/rate and usage/efficiency variances for material, labour and variable overhead.
				✓			Calculate fixed overhead expenditure and volume variances.
				✓			Calculate subdivision of the fixed overhead volume variance into capacity and efficiency variances.
				✓			Calculate sales price and sales volume variances (calculation of the latter on a unit basis related to revenue, gross profit and contribution).
	c. Variance analysis (without mix and yield variance)			✓			Use material, labour, variable overhead, fixed overhead and sales variances.
		d. Activity-based costing		✓			Calculate the costs for products or services using activity-based costing.
				✓			Determine the advantages and disadvantages of activity-based costing compared with traditional marginal and absorption costing methods.
e. Digital costing			✓			Determine the potential differences and difficulties of costing digital products as compared to costing traditional products.	

P1B: Budgeting and Budgetary Control		Skill level				Representative task statement	
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation		
1. Rationale for budgets	a. Role of budgets	✓				Understand the purpose of budgeting and the advantages and disadvantages of implementing budgets.	
		✓				Understand the potential impact of different legal environments, currency fluctuations and/or political climate on usefulness of budgets.	
		✓				Understand the period when budgets should be created and what time periods are covered and how that impacts the usefulness of budgets.	
	b. Rationale for budgeting	✓				Understand how budgets can help create accountability and communication between individuals and teams.	
		✓				Understand how budgets can help further the strategic and operating plans of a business.	
		✓				Understand how budgets can help energize and motivate individuals and teams.	
		✓				Understand the organisational structure of costs and revenues and their relationship to controllability of costs.	
2. Budgeting concepts	a. Forecasting		✓			Prepare time series analysis including moving totals and averages, treatment of seasonality, trend analysis using regression analysis and applicability in forecasting product and service volumes.	
	b. Master budgets			✓			Determine the budget setting process, limiting factors and the interaction between component budgets and the master budget.
					✓		Prepare a budget for any account in the master budget based on projections/forecasts and managerial targets.
					✓		Determine causality in cost function estimates and impact on budgets.
					✓		Calculate revenue and cost estimates using quantitative analyses.
c. What-if analysis in budgeting			✓		Prepare "what-if" analyses based on alternative projections of volumes, prices and cost structures.		

P1B: Budgeting and Budgetary Control (cont.)		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
	d. The technologies available for improving budgeting		✓			Use the output of computer or spreadsheet based planning models for sensitivity analysis (e.g., calculate the impact of changes in material prices on budgeted net income).
			✓			Determine potential data problems when estimating revenues and costs for budgeting purposes. Determine if data and assumptions are reliable, identify any missing data and determine the impact of data outliers.
			✓			Determine the benefits and costs of incremental, zero-based, rolling and activity-based budgets and beyond budgeting approaches to budgeting.
3. Budgetary control	a. The concept of budgetary control	✓				Understand how and why the budgetary control system may provide feedback and feedforward to the organisation.
		✓				Understand how flexible and flexed budgets are utilized in the budgeting process and their relationship to actual output and costs.
			✓			Calculate and interpret overall flexed budget variances.
	b. Human dimensions of budgeting	✓				Understand the conditions necessary to set effective budgets and how target setting impacts motivation and behaviour.
		✓				Understand how effective budgets must identify controllable and uncontrollable outcomes.
			✓			Determine the behavioural impacts of budgetary control (short-termism, budgetary slack, ignoring of non-financial factors) and how they can be managed.
			✓			Determine the ethical implications in budgeting on organisations in the context of a competitive market, a government agency, or subsidiaries.

P1C: Short-Term Commercial Decision-making		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. Short-term decisions made by organisations	a. Pricing and revenue maximising decisions	✓				Understand the issues that arise in pricing decisions and the conflict between marginal cost principles and the need for full recovery of all costs incurred.
		✓				Understand relevant cash flows and their use in pricing decisions.
		✓				Understand the strategic implications of short-term decision-making.
				✓		Use the principles of decision-making, including the identification and use of relevant cash flows and qualitative factors.
			✓			Understand short-term pricing decisions for special orders or special projects and the challenge with short-term decision-making and the related impact on long-term decisions making.
	b. Product decisions			✓		Apply relevant cost analysis to short-term decisions, including special selling price decisions, make or buy decisions, discontinuation decisions and further processing decisions.
				✓		Prepare a multi-product break-even analysis, including break-even and profit/volume charts, contribution/sales ratios and margin of safety.
			✓		Apply break-even analysis in multiple product contexts.	
2. Concepts used for short-term decision-making	a. Objectives of decision-making	✓				Understand the conflicts between cost accounting methods used for short-term decision-making and financial accounting concepts used for profit reporting and inventory valuation.
	b. The underlying concepts of short-term decision-making	✓				Understand whether a cost/revenue/cash flow estimate is relevant when considering a short-term decision or project.

P1C: Short-Term Commercial Decision-making (cont.)		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
3. Techniques to support short-term decision-making	a. Relevant cost analysis	✓				Understand relevant cash flows and non-financial factors and how it affects make or buy decisions.
		✓				Understand relevant cash flows and non-financial factors and how it affects discontinuation decisions.
				✓		Calculate the associated revenues and costs with make or buy and discontinuation decisions.
	b. Breakeven analysis			✓		Calculate the breakeven point and output level required to meet income targets.
	c. Product mix decisions with constraints			✓		Perform simple product mix analyses in situations where there are limitations on product / service demand and one other production constraint.
	d. Data & Technology	✓				Understand the benefits and costs of financial and non-financial data and computer, spreadsheet, or visualization outputs to help with make or buy decisions, product mix decisions with constraints, discontinuation decisions, or breakeven point calculations.
				✓		Prepare the inputs for the use of linear programming for situations involving multiple constraints.
			✓		Use results of graphical methods and simultaneous equations of two variable problems to identify optimal solutions.	

P1D: Dealing with Uncertainty in the Short-Term		Skill level				Representative task statement	
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation		
1. Basic risk management in the short term	a. Nature of risk and uncertainty in short term	✓				Understand the types of risk and uncertainties organisations face when preparing and implementing budgets and when making short-term decisions.	
		✓				Understand the impact of individuals' risk attitudes on decision-making in the short term.	
	b. Basic sensitivity analysis to budgeting and short-term decision-making			✓			Quantify risk using sensitivity analysis, expected values, standard deviations and probability tables.
				✓			Use a basic sensitivity analysis and "what if" in decision modelling to identify variables that might have impacts on project outcomes.
				✓			Use decision trees for multi-stage short-term decision problems.
				✓			Apply decision models to deal with uncertainty in decision-making.

F1: Financial Reporting

What the finance function does and its implications.

Content weighting:

Content area	Weighting
A. The Regulatory Environment of Financial Reporting	10%
B. Financial Statements	45%
C. Principles of Taxation	20%
D. Managing Cash and Working Capital	25%
	100%

F1A: Regulatory Environment of Financial Reporting		Skill level				Representative task statement	
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation		
1. Regulators and their role	a. The major regulators	✓				Understand the need for the regulation of financial information and the key elements of the regulatory environment for financial reporting including local corporate law, local and international frameworks, local and international financial reporting standards.	
	b. What they do	✓				Understand the roles and structures of key bodies involved in the regulation of financial reporting information (e.g., The International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), the IFRS Foundation, IFRS Advisory Council, IFRS Interpretations Committee and the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO).	
	c. Why they regulate financial reporting	✓				Understand the provisions of the CGMA Code of Ethics and the relationship to preparation of financial reporting information.	
			✓				Understand the IFRS standard setting process and the interaction of local GAAP bodies with the IASB.
			✓				Understand rules-based versus principles-based approaches to accounting regulation.
2. Corporate governance principles and financial reporting	a. The role of the board in corporate governance	✓				Understand the role of the board in corporate governance.	
	b. Corporate governance and financial stewardship in financial reporting	✓				Understand the need and scope for corporate governance regulations and different approaches to corporate governance regulations from around the world.	

F1B: Financial Statements		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. The main elements of financial statements	a. IFRS conceptual framework	✓				Understand the key principles contained within the IASB's Conceptual Framework for Financial Reporting.
		✓				Define the fundamental and enhancing qualitative characteristics of financial information.
		✓				Understand the elements of financial statements prepared in accordance with IFRS .
		✓				Define the reporting entity for consolidated and un-consolidated financial statements.
		✓				Understand the recognition (and derecognition) criteria within the financial statements.
		✓				Understand the appropriate measurement bases to a given scenario.
		✓				Understand the key presentation and disclosure principles for financial statements.
		✓				Understand the concept of capital maintenance.
2. Specific IFRS financial reporting standards	a. Non-current assets		✓			Apply the recognition (and derecognition), initial measurement and subsequent measurement principles in the financial statements.
			✓			Apply the held for sale and discontinued operations criteria.
			✓			Apply the recognition, initial measurement and subsequent measurement principles in the financial statements of the lessee (excluding sale and leaseback and remeasurement of lease liabilities).
			✓			Identify impairment indicators and account for impairment losses.
			✓			Identify the components of the cost of inventory and how it should be measured at period end.
			✓			Identify if an event is adjusting or non-adjusting and its accounting treatment.
3. Financial reporting standards to prepare basic financial statements	a-d. Statement of financial position, statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows		✓			Prepare extracts from the primary financial statements for an individual entity in accordance with IFRS including the statement of financial position, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows (indirect method).

F1C: Principles of Taxation		Skill level				Representative task statement	
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation		
1. Different types of taxes	a. Direct versus indirect	✓				Understand direct and indirect taxation, taxable person, incidence and competent jurisdiction.	
		✓				Understand different types of taxation (e.g., progressive, proportional and regressive).	
		✓				Understand different types of direct taxation in the context of an incorporated entity (e.g., tax on trading income and capital taxes).	
		✓				Understand different types of indirect taxation in the context of an incorporated entity (e.g., unit taxes, ad valorem taxes, excise duties, property and wealth taxes, consumption taxes and sales taxes).	
	b. Corporate versus personal	✓				Understand the impact of employee taxation.	
2. Tax for corporates	a. Basis of taxation	✓				Understand the sources of taxation rules such as domestic legislation, court rulings, domestic interpretations and guidelines, international guidelines and taxation agreements between different countries.	
		✓				Understand the powers of taxation authorities and the administration of taxation including the principles of record keeping, deadlines and penalties.	
		✓				Understand the distinction between accounting profit and taxable profit.	
	b. Accounting profit and taxable profit			✓			Identification and treatment of exempt income or income taxed under different rules.
				✓			Identification and treatment of allowable and disallowable expenditure.
			✓				Understand replacement of accounting depreciation with tax depreciation.
					✓		Determine capital allowances.
					✓		Calculate tax depreciation allowances.
			✓				Understand the concept of rollover relief.
			✓				Understand the methods of relieving capital losses.
			✓				Understand reliefs for trading losses.
					✓		Calculate capital tax on the sale of an asset.
		c. Calculate corporate tax			✓		Calculate corporate income tax liability.

F1C: Principles of Taxation (cont.)		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
3. Relevant issues that affect taxation	a. Taxes across international borders	✓				Understand the concepts of corporate residence and the key bases of determining residence, the types of overseas operations (subsidiary or branch and the implications of each on taxation), issue of double taxation and the methods of gaining relief, types of foreign taxation and the distinction between withholding tax and underlying tax (calculation will not be tested).
	b. Ethics of taxation	✓				Understand the ethical impact of transfer pricing on corporate taxation.
			✓			

F1D: Cash and Working Capital		Skill level				Representative task statement
Lead outcome	Component outcome	Remembering and understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation	
1. Types and sources of short-term finance	a. Types of short-term finance	✓				Understand the types of short-term finance methods including trade payables, overdrafts, short-term loans and debt factoring.
	b. Financial institutions	✓				Understand the types of financial institutions that can provide the sources of short-term finance.
2. Operating and cash cycles	a. Operating cycle		✓			Calculate trade receivable, trade payable and inventory days.
	b. Cash flow cycle		✓			Calculate trade receivables, trade payables and inventory days and compare to prior periods, competitors, or the industry as a whole.
3. Different techniques used to manage working capital	a. Policies relating to elements of operating and cash cycle		✓			Determine the working capital cycle and the financial impact of changing working capital policies.
				✓		Determine the approaches to manage the total level of investment in working capital (aggressive, moderate and conservative).
				✓		Apply methods of trade receivables management, including credit control procedures and debt factoring.
				✓		Apply methods of trade payables management and significance of trade payables as a source of finance and how this affects the relationships with suppliers.
				✓		Apply methods of inventory management (e.g., JIT), including calculations of the economic order quantity (EOQ).
		✓				Understand the risk of overtrading.
	b. Forecasts			✓		Prepare short-term cash flow forecasts and identify any surpluses or deficits.
				✓		Determine the types of cash investment including interest-bearing deposits, short-term treasury bills and other securities.
		✓			Understand the principles of investing in the short term including maturity, return, security and liquidity.	
	c. Risks relating to working capital		✓			Determine the risks and opportunities related to working capital management.

Examination approach

Structure and format

Each Objective Test is 90 minutes long. A 15-minute tutorial is available before the start of the examination to allow candidates to familiarise themselves with the test driver.

Each Objective Test comprises 60 questions drawn from across the individual subjects of the syllabus in line with the weightings for each content area as set out in the blueprint.

All questions are independent and worth equal marks. Partial marks are not available – all elements of a question must be answered correctly for it to be marked correct. Candidates may answer questions in any order and can navigate back and forth to any question to change their answer, time permitting.

Item types

The following objective test items may be used:

- ▶ Multiple choice
- ▶ Multiple response
- ▶ Hot spot
- ▶ Fill in the blank (number entry)
- ▶ Drag and drop

Reference materials

The mathematical tables and formulae that will be included for reference in each Objective Test as follows:

E1	None
P1	Present value table, cumulative present value table, normal distribution table and the following formulae: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Probability<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rules of addition- Rules of multiplication▶ Descriptive statistics<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Arithmetic Mean- Standard deviation▶ Index numbers<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Price- Quantity▶ Time series<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Additive model- Multiplicative model▶ Financial mathematics<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Compound interest (values and sums)- Annuity- Perpetuity▶ Quadratic equations▶ Linear regression and correlation
F1	None

Examples of how the tables and formulae will be presented are available from Cimaglobal.com/Tables

A notepad and pen are provided for planning and workings along with an on-screen scratch pad.

A calculator is included within the test driver although candidates are permitted to take their own calculators into the test centre provided it's a CIMA approved model.

Marking, grading and feedback

On the successful completion of an Objective Test, the candidate will be given a provisional pass or fail grade before leaving the test centre. CIMA will confirm the final grade on MyCIMA within 48 hours of taking the assessment. For more information on how to interpret your results and feedback, guidance will be given in MyCIMA.

Feedback on performance in each content area of the examination will be given in the form of a proficient/not proficient rating. There is no requirement to achieve a grade of proficient in all content areas.

Candidate experience

The Objective Tests are 90 minutes long, computer based and available on demand at over 5,000 Pearson VUE assessment centres worldwide. Candidates can book their tests up to 48 hours prior to the testing date, subject to centre availability.

A provisional grade (pass/fail) will be given at the test centre on completion of the test. The final grade will be confirmed on MyCIMA within 48 hours of taking the assessment.

For more information on the operational and administrative aspects of the Examination please refer to cimaglobal.com.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Capstone examination	<p>A capstone examination is designed to demonstrate mastery of previously acquired knowledge and skills and the drawing together of these to provide solutions to unstructured problems.</p> <p>It takes place at the end of a period of study and serves as a culminating assessment experience. By its position and design it is a synoptic assessment.</p>
Case study	<p>A (fictional) realistic simulation of an organisation or problem that a candidate could reasonably expect to face if operating in the role being assessed.</p>
Simulation	<p>An assessment exercise that involves the achievement of a specific task or tasks which seek to reproduce real life situations.</p>
Synoptic assessment	<p>A synoptic assessment is one that combines two or more modules (subjects) of study into a single assessment.</p> <p>Its aim is the “undoing” of the modularisation (in CIMA's case, pillar and subject divisions) of the syllabus and to help students make connections between the modules and provide a more holistic approach to learning and assessment.</p> <p>It is typically delivered at the end of a course or programme to assess across all the knowledge, skills and behaviours developed within that course.</p>
Blueprint	<p>A test blueprint is a document that gives clear guidance to all stakeholders (candidates, tuition providers, examination item writers) on what is examinable for a particular test. It will also normally include details about the test such as information on the weightings for/ importance of specific elements of the test or mapping the different cognitive levels of the test content.</p>
Task statement (Objective Tests)	<p>A task statement is a plain English description of what someone should be able to know and do.</p> <p>For Objective Tests, task statements will form the basis of the blueprint.</p>
Core activities (Case Study)	<p>Business-related tasks which are common to the role being simulated and valued by employers which, if performed satisfactorily, enable the demonstration of the assessment outcomes.</p>
Assessment outcome (Case Study)	<p>A clear assertion of what a CIMA qualified professional can do when the examination has been completed and what the assessment will be designed to measure. Case Study assessment outcomes will be synoptic.</p>

Appendix

International accounting standards

For all students of the F pillar and all Case Studies

The CIMA syllabus for the F pillar (and BA3) makes numerous references to the International Accounting Standards. Although students are not expected to learn the title of each one, the content and application of a number of them are an essential part of the learning outcomes and examinable in both objective tests and case study exams.

This table describes the content, briefly, of the standards that are currently in publication and the relevance to each CIMA subject. At the end of this article, we provide a summary of how the examinable date for IFRS is determined for the OT exams and offer illustrative examples.

International financial reporting standards (IFRS)

Number	Name	Application/relevant articles	Useful to be studied in conjunction with:	Examinable subjects
IFRS 1	First-time adoption of international financial standards	Not examinable		
IFRS 2	Share-based payment	Not examinable		
IFRS 3	Business combinations	<p>For the acquirer of a target entity, it explains how to recognise and measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ assets and liabilities of the acquiree; ▶ any non-controlling interest in the acquiree; and ▶ goodwill or a gain on a bargain purchase. <p>Also explains the disclosure requirements to enable users to determine the nature and financial impact of the business combination.</p>	IAS 27, IAS 28, IFRS 10, IFRS 11	From F2
IFRS 5	Non-current assets held for sale and discontinued operations	<p>Defines a non-current asset held for sale and explains how such an asset is measured and presented in the financial statements.</p> <p>The standards also defines what is meant by a discontinued activity and explains the presentation and disclosure of such activities in the financial statements. However, this element of the standard is not examinable.</p>	IAS 16, IAS 36	From F1

Number	Name	Application/relevant articles	Useful to be studied in conjunction with:	Examinable subjects
IFRS 6	Exploration for and Evaluation of mineral assets	Not examinable		
IFRS 7	Financial instruments: disclosures	Not examinable		
IFRS 8	Operating segments	Not examinable		
IFRS 9	Financial instruments	Provides the recognition and measurement rules for financial instruments.		From F2
IFRS 10	Consolidated financial statements	For an entity that controls one or more other entities, sets out the principles for the presentation and preparation of the consolidated financial statements.	IAS 27, IAS 28, IFRS 3, IFRS 11	From F2
IFRS 11	Joint arrangements	Sets out the financial reporting principles for entities that have an interest in jointly controlled arrangements.	IAS 27, IAS 28, IFRS 3, IFRS 10	From F2
IFRS 12	Disclosure of interests in other entities	Describes the disclosure requirements for an entity that has interests in other entities to enable the users to evaluate the nature and risks of the relationships, in addition to the effects on the group financial statements.		From F2
IFRS 13	Fair value measurement	Defines fair value and describes how it is measured as well as the disclosure requirements about such measurements.		From F2

Number	Name	Application/relevant articles	Useful to be studied in conjunction with:	Examinable subjects
IFRS 14	Regulatory deferral accounts	Not examinable		
IFRS 15	Revenue from contracts with customers	Prescribes the accounting treatment for revenue.		From F2
IFRS 16	Leases	Describes the accounting treatment of leases in both the lessee's financial statements (F1) and the lessor's financial statements (F2). Note: accounting for sale and leaseback transactions is not examinable.		From F1
IFRS 17	Insurance contracts	Not examinable		

International accounting standards (IAS)

Number	Name	Application/relevant articles	Useful to be studied in conjunction with:	Examinable subjects
IAS 1	Presentation of financial statements	Provides guidance on the presentation of statement of financial position (SoFP), statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income and statement of changes in equity (SOCIE).		From BA3
IAS 2	Inventories	Provides guidance on the determination of cost of inventory (raw materials, work in progress and finished goods), its valuation and any subsequent write-offs as an expense.		From BA3
IAS 7	Statement of cash flows	Provides guidance on definitions of cash and cash equivalents and how to present cash flows in a statement of cash flows.		From BA3
IAS 8	Accounting policies, changes in accounting estimates and errors	Not examinable		
IAS 10	Events after the reporting date	Describes the definition of events after the reporting period and explains how they are accounted for and any disclosures required.		From F1
IAS 12	Income taxes	Prescribes the accounting treatment of income taxes and deferred tax.		From F2
IAS 16	Property, plant and equipment	Explains the recognition and measurement of property, plant and equipment. This includes initial cost, subsequent expenditure, depreciation and revaluation of such assets.	IAS 36, IAS 38, IFRS 5	From BA3

Number	Name	Application/relevant articles	Useful to be studied in conjunction with:	Examinable subjects
IAS 19	Employee benefits	Not examinable		
IAS 20	Accounting for government grants and the disclosure of government assistance	Not examinable		
IAS 21	The effects of changes in foreign exchange rates	Considers the accounting treatment of transactions in a currency other than the entity's home currency. This includes transactions for an individual entity and how to translate a subsidiary entity in preparation for consolidation.		F2
IAS 23	Borrowing costs	Not examinable		
IAS 24	Related party disclosures	Explains the disclosure requirements that draw attention to the possibility that the statements of financial position and profit or loss may be affected by transactions and outstanding balances with parties related to the entity.		From F2
IAS 26	Accounting and reporting by Retirement Benefit Plans	Not examinable		
IAS 27	Separate financial statements	Outlines the accounting and disclosure requirements for investments in subsidiaries, joint ventures and associates when an entity prepares separate financial statements.	IFRS 3, IFRS 10, IFRS 11, IAS 28	From F2
IAS 28	Investments in associates and joint ventures	Explains how to account for investments in associates. This includes the application of the equity method used when accounting for associates and joint ventures.	IAS 27, IFRS 3, IFRS 10, IFRS 11	From F2

Number	Name	Application/relevant articles	Useful to be studied in conjunction with:	Examinable subjects
IAS 29	Financial reporting in hyperinflationary economies	Not examinable		
IAS 32	Financial instruments: presentation	Prescribes the presentation of financial instruments.	IFRS 7, IFRS 9	From F2
IAS 33	Earnings per share	Prescribes the principles for the calculation and presentation of basic and diluted earnings per share.		From F2
IAS 34	Interim financial reporting	Not examinable		
IAS 36	Impairment of assets	Explains that an asset or cash generating unit cannot be reported at a value higher than its recoverable amount and how to account for any resulting impairment.	IAS 16, IAS 38	From F1
IAS 37	Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets	Prescribes the accounting and disclosure requirements for provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets.	IAS 10	From F2
IAS 38	Intangible assets	Prescribes the recognition and measurement of intangible assets.	IAS 36	From BA3
IAS 40	Investment property	Not examinable		
IAS 41	Agriculture	Not examinable		

Policy regarding examinable dates for IAS/IFRS for CIMA 2019 professional qualification

The assessments will be set in accordance with relevant International Accounting Standards and International Financial Reporting Standards. This also applies to the material relating to Financial Reporting Exposure Drafts.

As a general rule, CIMA will examine such standards from the effective date (or as close as is practical). This will normally be the date that a new examination blueprint becomes effective. Details of specific standards that are examinable for the period covered by the examination blueprint will be stated in the objective test section of the blueprint.

For Case Study Examinations, where individual standards will not normally be directly assessed and where marking can accommodate a variety of approaches, candidates may refer to new standards before the effective date where early adoption is permitted.





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