

OVERALL EXAM — COMMON FINAL EXAMINATION (CFE)

OVERALL EXAM ASSESSMENT FORMAT:

The CFE is a three day case-based exam with the following maximum times for each day:

- Day 1 - 4 hours
- Day 2 - 5 hours
- Day 3 - 4 hours

FOR DAY 1 (CASE LINKED TO CAPSTONE 1 MODULE):

“Assess enabling competencies i.e. critical thinking and decision-making ability on a case related to Capstone 1, drawing on the previous group work/report.”

CFE – Day 1

The assessment of the Day 1 case will focus on enabling skills, e.g. a candidate’s ability to apply critical thinking, decision-making skills, professional judgment, and integration. The assessment will include evaluating links to the Capstone 1 case (i.e. ensuring there is a clear understanding of the case components, and group work completed by the candidate).

Day 1 is common to all candidates and therefore draws upon the common knowledge (Core plus Entry columns). The need to draw on these technical competencies will vary from case to case, depending on the nature of the Capstone 1 case.

Candidates will have access to their Capstone 1 case (not the solution or group work) during the examination.

FOR DAY 2 (THE ROLE CASE):

“Assess depth in Financial Reporting or Management Accounting and one elective area; test ability to play an Elective “role” by tailoring an answer to a large common case.”

CFE – Day 2

Candidates are provided with one case, but respond assuming one of four specific roles. Candidates seeking licensure must demonstrate depth in the Day 2 Assurance role’s elective competencies and depth in Financial Reporting over the combined Day 2 and Day 3 examinations.

The Day 2 case will focus on assessing depth of competence, in two ways, within each role:

1. Depth in the Core Financial Reporting and/or Management Accounting competencies* (i.e. these competencies are common to all roles).
2. Depth in one of the four Electives (chosen in advance by candidates), therefore may be broader than one competency area (e.g. the Performance Management Elective includes Governance, Management Accounting, Audit and Assurance, and Financial Reporting competencies).

Although the cases will focus on these two components, all prior learning are also testable, and therefore the roles may draw upon any of the Core or Entry column competencies as part of the requireds within each role.

Day 2 of the exam is designed to be completed by an average candidate in three and one half (3.5) hours; however, candidates will be allowed five (5) hours to complete it to allow time for filtering case information and organization their responses.

The financial statements will be pre-loaded into the spreadsheet component of the software used to respond so that candidates may copy and paste them into their responses.**

*It is possible that the common component of the Day 2 case touches only Financial Reporting or only Management Accounting. The number of opportunities to demonstrate depth over the combined Day 2 and Day 3 examinations will be equated to ensure fairness to candidates.

FOR DAY 3 (THE MULTI-COMPETENCIES CASES):

“Assess breadth in the competency areas and provide additional depth opportunities while testing the enabling skills.”

CFE – Day 3

Day 3 is common to all candidates and therefore the knowledge level expected is based on the expectations set for the end of Core.

The Day 3 cases assess both technical and enabling competencies. The assessment will focus on ensuring candidates are well-rounded professionals who can address an array of issues by presenting a variety of different small cases and roles.

Day 3 provides additional depth opportunities in Financial Reporting and Management Accounting competencies and ensures candidates have sufficient breadth of competency in all six competency areas.

CFE, candidates can expect 3 or 4 cases for a total of 240 minutes on Day 3, where the maximum time for any one case is 90 minutes and the minimum is 45 minutes. Candidates will be advised if and when the cases begin to exceed 90 minutes.

OTHER INFORMATION

Candidates will have access to restricted resource material i.e. CPA Handbooks, the Income Tax Act, the Excise Tax Act, tax shield formula and other relevant tax information on all three days of the CFE. The standards and regulations that are testable are those in effect, or substantively enacted for tax purposes, as of December 31 of the prior year. Note that the cut off for inclusions is November 30th, therefore any new Handbook releases or tax legislation introduced between December 1 and December 31 are not testable. Refer to the latest [Technical Update for Examinations](#) to learn about the technical updates that affect the examinable material for the CFE.

Starting with the May 2023 CFE, all tables on the CFE that contain ten or more lines of financial information, including financial statements, will be pre-loaded into the spreadsheet component of the exam writing software so that candidates may copy and paste them into their responses. This is applicable to all simulations on all days of the CFE.

The Capstone 1 case will be used twice as the basis for the Day 1 of the CFE before being retired. Candidates who fail Day 1 of the CFE can re-attempt the next sitting of the Day 1 of the CFE without repeating Capstone 1. Candidates who fail Day 1 for a second-time will need to familiarize themselves with the new Capstone 1 case before attempting Day 1 of the CFE again.

Candidate failing either of Day 2 or Day 3 of the CFE must reattempt both days. Candidates who fail all three days must attempt the entire CFE again at the next sitting.