



CPA Harmonized Education Policies Vol. 2

*A collection of policy directives for the
Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance*

Effective September 1, 2016

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Introduction

The *CPA Harmonized Education Policies Vol. 2* outline the national guidelines regarding the implementation of policies for admission, administration, courses, course examinations and other policies for the CPA Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF).

Program requirements

Individuals must meet education and examination requirements to be eligible for the ACAF. There are no work experience requirements for the Certificate.

ACAF program structure

The ACAF program is made up of 11 courses: six technical courses and five applied courses.



There are five entry courses that are prerequisites for admission to the ACAF program:

- Introductory Financial Accounting
- Introductory Management Accounting
- Intermediate Financial Reporting 1
- Intermediate Financial Reporting 2
- Business Law

The entry and technical courses can be completed through the CPA profession or a post-secondary institution. Applied courses are only available through the CPA profession, with the exception of Accounting Software Application.

Registration guidelines

The ACAF program is open to both Canadian and non-Canadian residents. All students¹, including foreign nationals who are resident in Canada or Bermuda, should register in their province/region of residence. Students may enroll in another province/region if the ACAF program is not offered in the students' province/region of residence. International students who are not residents in Canada or Bermuda must register through CPA Canada International.

Provincial/regional admission processes may vary.

¹ In Ontario, the term enrollee is used

1 Admission Policies

1.1 Admission requirements

Prior to enrolling in any technical course, it is recommended that students successfully complete all entry courses. The entry courses can be taken in any order provided that prerequisite requirements are met.

Entry Course	Prerequisite Requirements
Introductory Financial Accounting	None
Introductory Management Accounting	Introductory Financial Accounting or concurrently
Intermediate Financial Reporting 1	Introductory Financial Accounting Introductory Management Accounting
Intermediate Financial Reporting 2	Intermediate Financial Reporting 1
Business Law	None

Entry courses are available as part of the CPA preparatory courses offered by the CPA profession. Selected post-secondary institutions also offer some or all of these courses. For information on the admission requirements for CPA preparatory courses, see *CPA Harmonized Education Policies Vol.3 Section 1.1 Admission requirements*.

Achievement in the prerequisite learning must meet the following standard:

- a) A passing grade or 60%, whichever is higher in each intermediate financial reporting entry courses,
- b) A passing grade or 50%, whichever is higher, in all other entry courses

There is no post-secondary diploma, certificate or degree requirement for entry to the ACAF program.

1.1.1 Currency of education

Applicants must complete at least one of the Intermediate Financial Reporting courses (or equivalent), with a minimum grade of 60%, within 10 years of admission to the ACAF program.

Applicants who completed courses more than 10 years prior to admission who have significant relevant work experience may apply for exemption from the currency requirement. Assessments of work experience may result in:

- No exemption
- A full exemption
- A partial exemption permitting students to challenge the course examination

1.2 Conditional admission

ACAF applicants who represent that they have satisfied all admission requirements, but whose official transcript for entry courses is not yet available, may be granted conditional admission to the ACAF program.

ACAF students who have been conditionally admitted are permitted to register in courses for which they are eligible (i.e. all courses for which they have met the prerequisites requirements) that begin within four months of their conditional admittance. They may complete these courses, and their results will be released. ACAF students will automatically be deregistered from all ACAF courses that start after the four month period if official transcripts are not received by the province/region.

1.3 Admission process

To complete admission to the ACAF program, applicants must submit:

- A correctly completed application form
- The appropriate fee remittance
- All required supporting documentation, which may include, official transcripts, international credit equivalency reviews (e.g. International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS)/World Education Services Canada (WES)), or transcripts from other recognized accredited bodies, proof of legal name, and completed student contract
- A study visa, for international, non-resident students studying in Canada, if required

2 Administrative Policies

2.1 Fees/refunds

Regional/provincial CPA bodies will set program access fees and collect these fees from students.

2.2 Transfers from other regions

ACAF students relocating to another province may transfer from one province/region to another on request. Transfers should normally occur at the completion of an ACAF course. The provincial/regional body receiving the transferred student will honour the assessment work completed by the provincial/regional body from which the student is transferring.

2.3 Program expulsion or suspension

ACAF students will be suspended or expelled from the program for:

- non-payment of fees
- failure to comply with program rules
- exhausting course or examination attempts
- academic misconduct, inappropriate behavior or copyright infractions (For more information, see *Chapter 5 Student Integrity and Behaviour Policies*.)

Students who are expelled may be considered for reinstatement. For more information, see Section 2.6 *Readmission*.

2.4 Withdrawals

2.4.1 Temporary program withdrawals

In special circumstances, as determined by the provincial/regional CPA body, ACAF students can apply in writing to withdraw from the program temporarily for a maximum of two years in total. Annual student dues may apply.

While they are withdrawn, students will not have access to program course material, but may have access to other benefits.

2.4.2 Permanent withdrawals

Students taking ACAF courses can permanently withdraw in good standing by submitting a request to their provincial/regional CPA body.

2.4.3 Course withdrawals

Voluntary course withdrawal requests must be made in writing to the appropriate provincial/regional CPA body by the ACAF student.

ACAF students withdrawing from an ACAF course are subject to the following consequences:

- No course attempt charged if the withdrawal request occurred after the session start date and before the final examination.
- A course attempt charged if the student attempts the final examination.
- A course attempt is charged if the student does not attempt the final exam and does not defer the exam to the next available sitting
- Required to restart the course if the student re-enrolls in the course

Administrative fees may apply. Please consult your provincial/regional CPA body for course refund policies.

2.5 Readmission

Students who have temporarily withdrawn from ACAF courses (for more information, see Section 2.4.1 *Temporary Withdrawals*) do not need to apply for readmission and are eligible to continue taking ACAF courses if they notify the appropriate provincial/regional CPA body before the two year time limit for temporary withdrawals.

Students who have been expelled or suspended (see Section 2.3 *Program expulsion or suspension*), or have chosen to permanently withdraw (for more information, see Section 2.4.2 *Permanent Withdrawals*) must apply for readmission to take ACAF courses. All admission requirements (see Section 1.1 *Admission requirements*) must be met, including currency requirements.

ACAF students who have been expelled or suspended will be considered for readmission, at the discretion of the provincial/regional body.

2.6 Academic accommodation

ACAF students may request academic accommodations in the case of a documented health condition or similar disability that may affect their ability to participate in a course or attempt its examination. Appropriate documentation must be provided and additional information may be requested to approve the requested accommodation.

3 Course Policies

3.1 Course sequencing

The order in which ACAF courses are completed depends on any course exemptions received by the student.

3.1.1 Technical course sequencing

ACAF technical courses can be taken in any order provided that prerequisite requirements have been met. A listing of the technical courses along with the prerequisite requirements follows:

Technical Courses	Prerequisite Courses
Advanced Financial Reporting	Intermediate Financial Reporting 2
Corporate Finance	Introductory Financial Accounting Introductory Management Accounting
Audit and Assurance	Intermediate Financial Reporting 2
Taxation	Introductory Financial Accounting Introductory Management Accounting
Intermediate Management Accounting	Corporate Finance
Information Technology	None

3.1.2 Applied course sequencing

ACAF applied courses can be taken in any order provided that prerequisite requirements have been met. A listing of the applied courses along with the prerequisite requirements follows:

Applied course	Prerequisite courses
Ethics and Workplace Skills*	Business Law and all technical courses
Accounting Software Application	Introductory Financial Accounting
Applied External Audit	Ethics and Workplace Skills
Applied Personal and Corporate Taxation	Ethics and Workplace Skills
Public Sector Financial Management Practice	Ethics and Workplace Skills
Not-for Profit Accounting and Related Topics	Ethics and Workplace Skills Accounting Software Application
Business Applications	Ethics and Workplace Skills Accounting Software Application

* Ethics and Workplace Skills may be taken concurrently with first applied course

3.2 Course exemptions

An exemption may be granted for an ACAF technical course and the Accounting Software Application course if the student has successfully completed an equivalent post-secondary institution course within the last 10 years with a mark of at least 60% (except for Information Technology where the pass mark is 50%).

Applicants whose academic credits can be sufficiently verified for equivalence through acceptable supporting documentation (for example, official transcripts, course syllabus, etc.), will be provided appropriate course exemptions for ACAF.

Academic credits that cannot be sufficiently verified for equivalence through acceptable supporting documentation (for example, official transcripts, course syllabus, etc.) will result in the applicant not receiving course exemptions.

With the exception of the Accounting Software Application course, there are no exemptions for applied ACAF courses.

3.3 Course currency

The Advanced Financial Reporting, Audit and Assurance and Taxation technical courses must have been completed within 10 years of enrolling in the Ethics and Workplace Skills course.

ACAF students who completed the Advanced Financial Reporting, Audit and Assurance and Taxation technical courses more than 10 years prior to enrolling in the Ethics and Workplace Skills course, and have significant relevant work experience may apply for exemption for the currency requirement. Assessment of work experience may result in:

- No exemption
- A full exemption
- A partial exemption permitting students to challenge the course examinations

3.4 Course assignments

To be eligible to attempt an examination, students must complete and submit all of the assignments specified for the course. Submitted assignments not meeting the minimum standard will be considered incomplete and the student will be considered ineligible to attempt the examination and an attempt will be charged. Course assignments and quizzes contribute 30% to the overall course grade.

3.4.1 Late assignments

No late assignments will be accepted; however, extensions may be granted under extenuating circumstances.

3.5 Passing a course

To pass an ACAF course, students must achieve a minimum grade of 60%, with the exception of Information Technology which the minimum grade is 50%. The final mark on the course, which may be based on various assessments, determines the grade.

For challenge examinations, the final course grade is based solely on the examination.

3.6 Repeating a course

ACAF students have a maximum of three attempts to pass each course. For Information Technology, where the passing mark is 50%, a student who fails the course must repeat the course before attempting the examination again.

For all other ACAF courses:

- **A student who fails the first attempt at a course with a mark of 50% or above** may write the examination at its next offering, without re-taking the course. If the student fails the second attempt, the student is required to retake the course in order to have a third and final attempt at the examination.

- **A student who fails the first attempt with a mark less than 50%** must retake the course before a second attempt at the examination is permitted.
- **If the third attempt is unsuccessful:**
 - **Technical courses:** students will not be able to attempt the ACAF course again. However, they can choose to complete the equivalent course at a post-secondary institution and can continue taking other ACAF technical courses through the CPA preparatory courses.
 - **Applied non-elective courses:** students are expelled from the program and must apply for readmission (see Section 2.5 *Readmission*). On readmission they must restart the ACAF applied courses.
 - **Applied elective courses:** no further attempt at that course can be made without withdrawal from the program and successful readmission to the ACAF program (see Section 2.5 *Readmission*). On readmission they must restart the ACAF applied courses. Students who are unable to successfully complete two of the electives are expelled and must apply for readmission. On readmission they must restart the ACAF applied courses.

3.7 Access to courses in Brightspace (D2L)

ACAF students will have access to a course in Brightspace (D2L) for six months from the date of registration in the course. At that point, courses will be “retired” and students will no longer have access. In special circumstances, access beyond the six-month time limit can be arranged if the provincial/regional staff approves the request. A fee may be applied for extended access.

4 Course Examination Policies

4.1 Course examinations

ACAF students must comply with the examination writing rules, and all applicable laws in their relevant jurisdictions.

ACAF students may be provided with access to reference material during course final examinations. The nature and volume of reference material will be adapted to the assessment objectives of each course.

4.1.1 Use of the laptop for examinations

To write the ACAF examinations, all students are required to have a laptop that conforms to ACAF program specifications, as outlined in the student handbook, with the required exam software loaded onto their machine.

4.2 Course examination deferrals

ACAF students who have completed the course assignments may defer writing the examination until the next examination offering. A fee may be applied. If they do not attempt the next offering, they fail the course and an attempt is charged. Deferral requests must be made to the appropriate provincial/regional CPA body within three business days after the examination. Students who do not attempt a course examination and have not made a deferral request will be deemed to have failed the course and an attempt is charged.

4.3 Course examination appeals

Only students who receive a final course grade of less than 60% are eligible to appeal. Only final examination results are subject to appeal; quizzes and assignments are not.

Appeals must be made to the provincial/regional CPA body within three business days of receiving examinations results. A fee may be applied to appeals. The appeal fee is refunded in the case of a successful appeal.

Appeal results may not be available before the next course begins. If the examination result under appeal is for a course that is prerequisite for the subsequent course, students may choose to enroll in and begin the next course. If the appeal is unsuccessful, students must withdraw from the subsequent course. Full or partial course fees may be refunded depending on the timing of the withdrawal. Please consult your provincial/regional CPA body for specific refund policies.

4.4 Ownership of examinations

ACAF examinations questions and student exam papers are the property of CPA Canada and under the exclusive custody and control of CPA Canada. ACAF students will not have access to their final examination papers at any time during the program. For more information, see Section 4.3 for *Course examination appeals*.

5 Student Integrity and Behaviour Policies

5.1 Academic integrity and misconduct

The CPA profession takes academic integrity and misconduct seriously. Academic misconduct in ACAF includes plagiarism, the enabling of plagiarism, theft of another or former student's work, and unethical behaviour such as lying or cheating. Submissions will be monitored for evidence of plagiarism. Penalties may include suspension or expulsion from the program.

5.2 Appropriate behaviour

ACAF students are expected to behave appropriately throughout the program. Appropriate behaviour includes but is not limited to: adhering to the student contract, behaving ethically, demonstrating integrity and honesty, and exhibiting respect to others including all written and oral communication with students, facilitators, educational staff and provincial, regional and national administrative staff. Penalties for inappropriate behaviour may include suspension or expulsion from the program.

5.3 Copyright and ownership

All ACAF course material, including student submissions, is the property of CPA Canada and/or publishers and software vendors. Students are subject to the use restrictions as stipulated in the ACAF student contract. Failure to comply with these restrictions may result in penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the program and legal prosecution.



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