



DECEMBER 2011 – STUDY GUIDE  
FOUNDATIONS IN ACCOUNTANCY

Paper FAU (INT)  
Foundations in Audit

# Introduction

This booklet contains the Study Guide for Paper FAU (INT): Foundations in Audit.

The Syllabus outlines the content of the paper and how that content is examined. The Study Sessions take the syllabus and expand it into teaching or study sessions of similar length. These sessions indicate what the examiner expects of candidates for each part of the syllabus, and therefore gives you guidance in the skills you are expected to demonstrate in the examinations. The time to complete each session will vary according to your individual capabilities and the time you have available to study. Tuition providers offering face-to-face tuition are recommended to design courses with a minimum of two hours tuition per study session. However, repeated coverage of the material is vital to ensure your understanding and recall of the subject. Be sure to practice past examination questions to consolidate your knowledge and read your *student accountant* magazine regularly.

If you have any queries concerning the study guide, please direct them to:

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[www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

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## **ABOUT ACCA**

ACCA is the largest and fastest-growing international accountancy body with 362,000 students and 131,500 members in 170 countries. We aim to offer first choice qualifications to people of application, ability and ambition around the world who seek a rewarding career in accountancy, finance and management. ACCA works to achieve and promote the highest professional, ethical and governance standards and advance the public interest.

## AIMS

To develop knowledge and understanding of the audit process from the planning stage through to the reporting stage and the techniques used in the conduct of internal and external audits.

## OBJECTIVES

On completion of this paper, candidates should be able to:

- explain the rules of professional conduct relating to the ethics of integrity, objectivity, independence and confidentiality and undertake audit procedures accordingly
- identify control objectives and weaknesses for an accounting system under review
- assess audit risks, produce an audit plan and design appropriate audit procedures
- carry out appropriate audit procedures in accordance with an audit plan on the basis of a validly selected sample
- draw valid conclusions from the results of audit tests
- prepare draft reports relating to an audit assignment.

## POSITION OF THE PAPER IN THE OVERALL SYLLABUS

Paper FAU requires the knowledge and understanding from Paper FA1, *Recording Financial Transactions* and Paper FA2, *Maintaining Financial Records*, to provide a basic understanding of the nature and objectives of an audit and general audit practice. Candidates will also be expected to be familiar with Paper FFA, *Financial Accounting*.

## SYLLABUS CONTENT

### 1 The business environment

- (a) The nature of accounting records, audit and the audit report
- (b) Requirements for becoming an auditor
- (c) Duties of an auditor
- (d) Responsibilities of auditors
- (e) Fraud and error
  - (i) liability to clients
  - (ii) liability to third parties

### 2 The audit framework

- (a) External audit and internal audit
- (b) Regulatory framework of auditing
  - (i) auditing standards
  - (ii) requirements of professional bodies
- (c) The audit engagement process

### 3 Audit personnel

- (a) The audit team
- (b) Liaison with client staff
- (c) Liaison with third parties
  - (i) experts
  - (ii) internal audit

### 4 Audit planning

- (a) The nature of an audit plan and programme
- (b) Understanding the entity and its environment
- (c) Risk
- (d) Materiality
- (e) Documentation
- (f) Audit planning meeting

### 5 Accounting systems and controls

- (a) The nature of accounting systems
- (b) General principles of control
- (c) Techniques to record accounting systems
  - (i) narrative notes
  - (ii) flowcharts
- (d) Techniques to evaluate accounting systems
  - (i) internal control questionnaires
  - (ii) internal control evaluation questionnaires
  - (iii) checklists
- (e) Major control cycles (manual and computerised)
  - (i) income (sales)
  - (ii) expenditure (purchases / inventory / non-current assets / payroll / expenses)
- (f) Tests of control
- (g) Reporting control deficiencies

# Foundations in Audit (INT)

## 6 Audit evidence and sampling

- (a) Financial statement assertions
- (b) Audit evidence and procedures
- (c) Verification techniques – physical examination, reperformance, third party confirmation, documentary evidence, vouching and analytical review
- (d) Audit sampling
- (e) Types of testing – tests of control and substantive testing
- (f) Computer assisted audit techniques
- (g) Audit of statement of financial position items – existence, completeness, occurrence, valuation and allocation, classification, rights and obligations

## 7 Audit completion

- (a) Audit review
  - (i) events after the end of the reporting period
  - (ii) going concern
  - (iii) opening balances and comparatives
- (b) Analytical procedures
- (c) Recording significant and material errors
- (d) Review by senior audit staff
- (e) Report of audit points arising (report to partner)
- (f) Letter of representation

## 8 Audit report

- (a) The standard audit report
- (b) Modified audit opinions

### KEY AREAS OF THE SYLLABUS

The key topic areas are as follows:

- controls
- audit planning
- practical application of audit techniques
- preparing draft reports.

### APPROACH TO EXAMINING THE SYLLABUS

The examination is a three-hour written paper. The paper consists of two sections structured as follows:

	Marks
Section A - 10 compulsory multiple choice questions of 2 marks each	20
Section B Four compulsory questions Q1+2 (25 marks each) Q3+4 (15 marks each)	50 <u>30</u>
Total	100

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For the financial accounting, audit and assurance, law and tax papers except where indicated otherwise, ACCA will publish *examinable documents* once a year to indicate exactly what regulations and legislation could potentially be assessed within identified examination sessions..

For paper based examinations regulation **issued** or legislation **passed** on or before 30th September annually, will be assessed from June 1st of the following year to May 31st of the year after. Therefore, paper based examinations in June 2011, December 2011 (and March 2012 where applicable) will be assessed on regulations issued and legislation passed on or before 30 September 2010.

Regulation issued or legislation passed in accordance with the above dates may be examinable even if the **effective** date is in the future. The term issued or passed relates to when regulation or legislation has been formally approved. The term effective relates to when regulation or legislation must be applied to an entity transactions and business practices.

## LEARNING MATERIALS

ACCA's Approved Learning Partner - content (ALP-c) is the programme through which ACCA approves learning materials from high quality content providers designed to support study towards ACCA's qualifications.

ACCA has one Platinum Approved Learning Partner content which is BPP Learning Media. In addition, there are a number of Gold Approved Learning Partners - content.

For information about ACCA's Approved Learning Partners - content, please go ACCA's Content Provider Directory.

The Directory also lists materials by Subscribers, these materials have not been quality assured by ACCA but they may be useful reading. You will also find details here of Additional Reading which the Examiner has suggested may be useful supplementary reading for students.

ACCA's Content Provider Directory can be found here –[http://www.accaglobal.com/learningproviders/alpc/content\\_provider\\_directory/search/](http://www.accaglobal.com/learningproviders/alpc/content_provider_directory/search/).

Relevant articles will also be published in Student Accountant.

## STUDY SESSIONS

### 1 The purpose and scope of an external audit and the audit framework

- (a) Explain the purpose and scope of an external audit
- (b) Outline the requirements governing the appointment and removal of auditors
- (c) Outline the duties and responsibilities of auditors
- (d) Explain the scope of International Standards on Auditing
- (e) Outline the fundamental principles of independent auditing

### 2 Professional ethics

- (a) Discuss the fundamental principles of ACCA's Code of Ethics and Conduct
- (b) Discuss the detailed requirements of, and illustrate the application of professional ethics in the context of auditor independence, objectivity and integrity as set out in ACCA's Code of Ethics and Conduct
- (c) Describe the auditor's responsibility with regard to confidentiality as set out in ACCA's Code of Ethics and Conduct

### 3 Internal audit function

- (a) Explain the purpose and scope of the internal audit function
- (b) Compare and contrast the roles of the internal audit function and the external audit function with regard to the detection of fraud and error
- (c) Identify the factors that external auditors should consider when evaluating the work of internal auditors

### 4 & 5 True and fair view, materiality, the auditors' report

- (a) Explain the concept of a true and fair view
- (b) Explain the concept of materiality and discuss the factors to be considered when making a judgement on whether an item is material
- (c) Provide and review an example of an auditors' report with an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of an incorporated company
- (d) Discuss the basic elements of the auditors' report
- (e) Discuss the concept of 'reasonable assurance'

## Foundations in Audit (INT)

### **6 The audit engagement process**

- (a) Explain the purpose and content of client acceptance procedures comprising client screening, professional clearance and independence checks
- (b) Discuss the engagement risks and the preconditions in relation to the acceptance of new audit engagements
- (c) Explain the purpose of an audit engagement letter
- (d) Examine and discuss the contents of an audit engagement letter

### **7, 8 & 9 Planning the audit**

- (a) Distinguish between a systems approach to an audit, a direct verification approach, a risk based approach and a balance sheet approach
- (b) Explain the concept of audit risk, focusing in particular on inherent risk and control risk
- (c) Explain how auditors obtain an understanding of the entity and its environment
- (d) Explain the role of audit programmes and summarise the advantages/disadvantages of using standard programmes
- (e) Outline planning issues with regard to audit planning meetings, the timing of audit work, staffing, training of the audit team, the use of suitable experts, and liaison with client staff including internal auditors
- (f) Explain how auditors may plan to use computer assisted audit techniques
- (g) Illustrate the use of an audit strategy and an audit plan

### **10 Documenting the audit**

- (a) Discuss the reasons for maintaining audit working papers
- (b) Explain the purpose of the current file and the permanent file
- (c) Describe the contents of a current file and a permanent file
- (d) Outline the quality control procedures that should exist over the review of audit working papers and in the reporting of important audit points to the audit engagement partner

- (e) Illustrate how information technology can be used in the documentation of audit work

### **11 Internal control I**

- (a) Explain the following terms:
  - (i) internal control system
  - (ii) control environment
  - (iii) control procedures
- (b) Describe the objectives of an internal control system
- (c) Discuss the different types of internal control
- (d) Describe and illustrate the inherent limitations of internal control systems
- (e) Discuss the importance of internal control to auditors

### **12,13 & 14 Internal control II**

- (a) Describe and illustrate control procedures to meet specified objectives for each of the following functional areas:
  - (i) purchases and trade payables
  - (ii) sales and trade receivables
  - (iii) wages and salaries
  - (iv) tangible non-current assets
  - (v) inventory
  - (vi) bank receipts and payments
  - (vii) cash receipts and payments
  - (viii) non-current liabilities

### **15 Internal control III**

- (a) Distinguish between application controls and general controls in computer-based systems and identify the objectives of each control type
- (b) Provide examples of specific general controls and application controls
- (c) Outline the typical control problems encountered in small computer-based systems

### **16 & 17 Internal control IV**

- (a) Describe the techniques used by auditors to record and evaluate manual and computer-based accounting systems

- (b) Provide examples of, and explain the format and contents of internal control questionnaires (ICQs) and internal control evaluation questionnaires (ICEQs)
- (c) Explain the purpose of tests of control
- (d) Distinguish between tests of control and substantive procedures

### **18, 19 & 20 Audit testing of accounting systems controls**

- (a) Explain the audit approach to testing accounting system controls over the following functional areas:
  - (i) purchases and trade payables
  - (ii) sales and trade receivables
  - (iii) wages and salaries
  - (iv) tangible non-current assets
  - (v) inventory
  - (vi) bank receipts and payments
  - (vii) cash receipts and payments
- (b) Explain the purpose of a letter on internal control, indicating when it should be issued
- (c) Provide information on an accounting system in a functional area and prepare points for inclusion in a letter on internal control, in the following format:
  - description of deficiency
  - implication of deficiency
  - recommendation(s) to address deficiency

### **21 Audit sampling**

- (a) Explain the relevance of sampling to the auditor
- (b) Outline selection methods, including random selection, systematic selection and haphazard selection
- (c) Outline the main factors affecting sample size

### **22 Audit evidence I**

- (a) Explain the importance of evidential material in the audit process
- (b) Identify the factors that influence the reliability of audit evidence
- (c) Describe and give examples of procedures used by auditors to obtain audit evidence, including the use of analytical procedures and computer-assisted audit techniques

### **23 Audit evidence II**

- (a) Explain the importance of financial statement assertions
- (b) For each area in the financial statements of an incorporated company, provide examples of the representations made by directors
- (c) Explain the rationale for designing audit programmes by reference to audit objectives
- (d) Outline the factors determining the extent of substantive procedures to be carried out on an audit

### **24 & 25 Audit evidence III**

- (a) Design audit programmes to meet specific audit objectives with regard to the following statement of financial position items:
  - (i) tangible non-current assets.
  - (ii) investments
  - (iii) trade receivables
  - (iv) prepayments
  - (v) bank and cash
  - (vi) trade payables
  - (vii) accruals
  - (viii) non-current liabilities
  - (ix) provisions

### **26 & 27 Audit evidence IV**

- (a) Explain why the audit of inventory is often an area of high audit risk
- (b) Describe the audit procedures that should be undertaken before, during and after attending an inventory count
- (c) Discuss the extent to which an auditor can rely on a system of perpetual inventory
- (d) Design an audit programme to meet specific audit objectives for the audit of inventory

## Foundations in Audit (INT)

### **28 & 29 Audit completion**

- (a) Explain the purpose and nature of carrying out an overall review of the financial statements prior to expressing an audit opinion and outline the purpose and nature of:
  - (i) the application of analytical procedures
  - (ii) a review of opening balances and comparatives
  - (iii) a review of events after the end of the reporting period
  - (iv) an evaluation of going concern
- (b) Explain the purpose of a letter of representation
- (c) Describe the contents of a letter of representation and provide examples of typical representations made in such a letter

### **30 Audit report**

- (a) Revise the form and content of an auditors' report with an unmodified opinion on the financial statements of an incorporated company (see sessions 4 & 5)
- (b) Outline the circumstances in which an auditor should issue a report with:
  - (i) a qualified opinion
  - (ii) an adverse opinion
  - (iii) a disclaimer of opinion