



EDUCATORS' BRIEFING 2020/21

PROFESSIONAL – AUDIT & ASSURANCE

Comments on Performance in August 2020 Examination

This was the first year using the TestReach online portal due to COVID-19. However, it was a very user-friendly process with minimal disruptions and did not affect the overall performance of the candidates in comparison to recent years. This was the third year incorporating the multiple choice question (MCQ) format for Question 3 and the two opening questions worth 30 marks each. Successful candidates were able to demonstrate their wide understanding of the auditing syllabus. The papers were well received and candidate's answers were of good quality with regards to content and presentation.

Pass rates in this exam compared favourably with previous years (2019 combined – 72%, 2018 combined – 81%). Both Examiner and Moderator were pleased with the performance as candidates coped well with the new online examination process. Questions 1 and 2 were well answered but there was a lack of candidates who used the excel function to their advantage (or use it at all). Question 3 (Multiple Choice) were quite mixed and in some cases ensured the number failing was not higher and increased their overall average even though they scored poorly on other areas. Questions 4, Ethical Issues, was answered quite well by most candidates but unfortunately, Question 5 (Audit Reports) was answered poorly by most candidates and a large proportion of those who attempted Question 5 subsequently failed the paper due to lack of depth of knowledge in this area.

Learning Outcomes:

Details of the learning outcomes applicable to this examination are provided on page 43 of the 2021 Syllabus which can be found on the CPA Ireland website www.cpaireland.ie

Syllabus Changes:

There have been changes to the syllabus for 2020/21. The overall design and standard of the paper will not change. Details of the Examinable Material applicable to this examination are provided on pages 84 to 89 of the 2021 Syllabus. The major changes see that Corporate Governance component of the previous Corporate Laws and Governance module move into the Audit and Assurance module. Also, in line with changing norms within the industry and profession the following amendments see Emerging Technologies and their effect on the role of the Auditor, and Professional Skepticism being included in the syllabus for 2020/2021. A further breakdown of the syllabus can be found [here](#).

Format of the Examination Papers for 2021:

The format is unchanged from the 2021 sittings.

Time allowed: The exam will still be 3 hours in length, plus 10 minutes reading time. Number of questions: There will be no change, i.e., the paper will consist of five questions, three compulsory questions and any one of two optional questions. Questions are marked as follows:

Section A (Three compulsory questions)

Question 1: Compulsory 30 Marks

Question 2: Compulsory 30 Marks

Question 3: Compulsory (MCQ) 20 Marks

Section B (Only **one from two** optional questions)

Question 4: Optional 20 Marks

Question 5: Optional 20 Marks

The papers for 2021 will attempt to cover a broad area of the syllabus over the course of both examinations. However, more than one topic may be examined from one section of the syllabus.