



TUTOR TIPS

We've gathered tips from the examiners to help you succeed at Professional and Advanced Level exams

In February ACA tutors and examiners from around the world descended upon Chartered Accountants' Hall in London to attend the ICAEW ACA Tutor Conference 2018. Vital took the opportunity to find out their essential tips for each Professional and Advanced Level exam.

PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

Audit and Assurance

"Students should ensure they read through all requirements carefully and then prioritise and manage their time carefully. It is important the answer addresses the requirement. Students who do this are more likely to answer the question without writing more than necessary, thus leaving themselves time to attempt all questions."

Business Planning: Taxation

"Timekeeping is essential. It is important to read the question carefully. Students should take their time answering questions and paying attention to the requirements. If the question asks for a 'detailed' or 'brief' answer then that's what students need to provide."

Business Planning: Banking

"Read the requirements carefully.

Students often lose several marks from not reading the requirements thoroughly. It is important to emphasise on the impact of technology, particularly the importance in the banking sector."

Business Planning: Insurance

"Take your time and read all the necessary requirements. The most marks are awarded to those students who answer their questions in reference to the insurance industry, for example the impact of a defect on reserving. Students whose answers are specific to the insurance industry are likely to be awarded higher marks."

Business Strategy and Technology

"Students should structure their answers including the use of relevant models and application to the scenario. The style of the answer should reflect professional scepticism. The students should explain and link points to numerical as well as written data. Using clear, separate and structured tables for data analysis is important."

Tax Compliance

"Students must remember to answer all elements of a particular requirement and therefore it is important the student understands and reads the requirements carefully. For example 'The students must identify fundamental principles and set out the safeguards'. Students should look for the 'and' or commas to find the different elements of the requirement."

Financial Accounting and Reporting

"It is important that students set their workings-out clearly so that the examiners can see narrative and figures, and links between the two. Students need to fully explain the financial reporting treatment and support this with calculations. As with all other exams, students should familiarise themselves with the requirements of the question."

Financial Management

"It is important that students understand when theory is and isn't required, along with key ratios when they are provided in the question, for example gearing. Students should also ensure that they know how to calculate ratios such as interest cover. Remember to show all workings as these equate to marks."

ADVANCED LEVEL

Case Study

"A key success factor is familiarity with the Advance Information. Students need to be able to understand the organisation

as if it were a client of their own. It is crucial the students take the time to prepare analytically for all aspects ahead of the exam."

Corporate Reporting

"It is important to remember that it is the depth of the answers and not the quantity that is key. Students must show professional scepticism in their answers but they must support their answers with evidence."

Strategic Business Management

"Firstly read and familiarise yourself with the requirements. Within the question there are terms of reference to each requirement. Reading the question carefully will help you understand what the requirement is. You are more likely to get marks for answering the question with acknowledgment of the requirements."

While the content of each exam is different, the key advice overwhelmingly from tutors is to take your time, read the requirements carefully to grasp what is being asked of you, and show workings clearly. You can improve your exam technique with a variety of webinars on exam skills at [icaew.com/listenagain](https://www.icaew.com/listenagain) ●

SOME STATS

2006

saw the first tutor conference held at Chartered Accountants' Hall, London

150

plus attended the 2018 conference, with delegates from around the world, including UK, Botswana, China, Greece, Cyprus, South Africa, Malaysia and Kenya

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workshops and drop-in sessions were held over two days, discussing the previous year's exams, computer-based exams, GDPR and sustainability

2018: SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability and technology were at the heart of the 2018 tutor conference. ICAEW has embraced the UN Sustainability Global Goals to enhance our vision of 'A world of strong economies', built on good governance and partnerships. ICAEW is determined to play its part. We have adopted the goals to articulate our vision and to express what we mean by public interest. In addition, we have the ambition to take the goals to every ICAEW Chartered Accountant and through them to the millions of businesses they advise and work with around the world.

We will do this through the Global Accounting Alliance, Chartered Accountants Worldwide and IFAC. We have embedded sustainability and corporate responsibility within ACA learning materials for the past decade. Here are a few examples of how we have done this in the Professional and Advanced Level exams.

Audit and Assurance

Students need to identify ethical and sustainability issues, perhaps by using a sustainability and corporate responsibility report.

Financial Management

Sustainability themes appear many times throughout the module. For example, Chapter one, 2.4 of the Financial Management study manual shows how sustainability forms part of firms' ethical policies and why firms need to take account of sustainability within their decisions and actions.

Strategic Business Management

This exam specifically explores the UN sustainability goals, and the importance of organisations to consider the environmental and social context within which they operate, reiterated by the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development.