

# **Ethics & Business Application (1) 2010**

# **Module outline**

**COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**

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# The Chartered Accountants Program

## About the Chartered Accountants Program

The Chartered Accountants Program (the CA Program) is the formal educational requirement for membership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (the Institute). The Institute is the only Australian professional accounting body recognised by the major accounting bodies worldwide, and is a founding member of the international accounting coalition, the Global Accounting Alliance (GAA).

The GAA represents more than 750,000 members worldwide and includes professional accounting organisations from the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, England/Wales, Japan, Germany, Ireland, Scotland, New Zealand and South Africa. The Institute is the only Australian accounting body within the Alliance that provides reciprocal arrangements with 10 of the other leading accounting bodies in the world.

The CA Program is also recognised as a Graduate Diploma\* by higher education authorities in Australia. Successful completion of the Program and the subsequent awarding of a Graduate Diploma provide candidates with substantial exemptions for Masters programs in many Australian universities.

The Grad Dip CA comprises the following five modules:

1. Taxation (TAX)
2. Audit & Assurance (AAA)
3. Management Accounting & Analysis (MAA)
4. Financial Accounting & Reporting (FIN)
5. Ethics & Business Application (EBA).

Of the five modules, the first four are technical modules and can be undertaken in any order. The final module, Ethics & Business Application (EBA), focusses on ethics and corporate governance as well as consolidating the learning from the four technical modules. Modules are not undertaken concurrently.

**Figure 1: Five Program Modules**



On successful completion of EBA, candidates will be awarded the Grad Dip CA and will then also be eligible to apply for membership with the Institute.

\* Applicable only to candidates who successfully complete all five modules of the CA Program developed by the Institute.

## Objectives of the CA Program

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The CA Program is designed to equip candidates with the knowledge, skills and values identified as essential in a Chartered Accountant. These have been expanded into the following 10 attributes:

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Knowledge	> informed about the latest international, disciplinary and business knowledge
Skills	> innovative problem solvers
	> forward-thinking change managers
	> technology-literate
	> collaborative team workers
	> capable communicators of shared understandings
Values	> service-oriented
	> ethical
	> professional
	> reflective about their own knowledge, skills and values

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Developing these attributes in a holistic manner is an integral feature of the Program.

## Learning & Assessment Guide

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Additional information about the Program can be found in the Chartered Accountants Program Learning & Assessment Guide (LAG) in the candidate section of *myCA*.

The LAG contains comprehensive information about:

- > Policies and regulations
- > Regional offices and key contacts
- > Learning resources
- > Assessment
- > Referencing
- > Further assistance and support.

Candidates can access *myCA* via <[charteredaccountants.com.au](http://charteredaccountants.com.au)> or, alternatively, <[myCA.blackboard.com](http://myCA.blackboard.com)>.

## Ethics & Business Application

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This module aims to develop candidates' skills in providing ethical corporate governance, financial reporting, tax, management accounting and audit and assurance advice for a range of circumstances. Broadly, the four units examine the following areas:

- > Unit 1: Ethics
  - Introduction to ethical thinking
  - Ethical theories
  - Professional standards for accountants
  - Ethical decision-making models
  - The seven signs of ethical collapse

- > Unit 2: Corporate governance
  - Introduction to corporate governance
  - Evolution of corporate governance
  - Corporate failures and corporate governance
  - Role of the Australian Securities Exchange
  - CLERP 9
  - Role of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission
  - International experiences
  - Corporate governance in practice
  - Good corporate governance principles for small business
  - Current issues
- > Unit 3: The business life cycle – Start-up and growth
  - Start-up
  - Growth
- > Unit 4: The business life cycle – Mature and exit
  - Mature
  - Exit.

## **Module objective**

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The overall objective of EBA is to develop competence in integrating knowledge, skills, values and ethics so that candidates can deliver sound professional judgement within a business context.

The EBA module requires candidates to:

- > analyse information from a variety of activities, and to
- > identify issues, interpret data, make decisions and respond to questions.

The activities in the Candidate Learning Pack (CLP) are designed to simulate the work situations that CAs commonly encounter.

## **Assumed knowledge**

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This module builds on knowledge from the prior technical modules.

Candidates are required to apply prior learning (from the technical modules and the theory in EBA) to the various stages of the business life cycle.

## Time allocation

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The expected workload for this module is approximately 91 hours. The breakdown of the 91 hours is approximately as follows:

	Number	Hours per unit	Hours of work
Candidate Learning Pack (CLP) reading, activities, <i>myCA</i> participation	4 units	20.00	80.00
Focus sessions	3	2.50	7.50
Exam (including 15 minutes reading time)	1	n/a	3.50
			91.00

This is only a guide, depending on various factors and circumstances, and does not include time that candidates allocate to studying for the final exam.

## Assessment

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To pass the module, candidates must:

- > attend all three focus sessions
- > pass the exam and
- > pass the module overall.

The assessment components are outlined below:

Assessment component	Contribution to final marks	Details
Focus sessions	Course requirement to attend	Focus session 1 will comprise an exploration of ethical dilemmas and corporate governance issues, as well as a team activity based on an actual case study.  Focus sessions 2 and 3 will involve a review of learning concepts and activities in the CLP and exam practice questions. No marks are awarded.
Final Examination	100%	Any element of the syllabus may be covered in four compulsory multi-part written questions (three (3) hours 15 minutes, plus 15 minutes reading time).

Further information on Assessment is available in the LAG on *myCA*.

## Candidate Learning Pack (CLP)

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The CLP is the primary learning resource and contains comprehensive learning material for all four units of study, including worked examples and activities. Candidates can work through the CLP either independently or in collaboration with their colleagues or mentors.

## *myCA*

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This is a web-based learning portal which is used to provide announcements and study material to candidates, as well as access to a candidate peer discussion forum.

## Focus sessions

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Focus sessions provide candidates with an opportunity to consolidate their learning by meeting and working with their peers in focus groups regularly throughout the module. The sessions are run by experienced CAs who facilitate candidate participation in team activities and exam practice questions.

## Prescribed reading materials

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There is no required text for this module. Previous technical CLPs for other modules will be available on *myCA* for reference:

- > TAX
- > AAA
- > MAA
- > FIN.

## Additional resources

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Key resources and references to complete the activities in each unit are listed at the commencement of each unit, and may include:

- > legislation
- > Standards and other pronouncements
- > websites
- > readings
- > cases, tax office rulings and determinations
- > other references.

**Note:** It is best practice to access the latest publication.