

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE: DESIGNING CURRICULA AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR QUALIFICATIONS THAT CATER TO BUSINESS NEEDS

This example illustrates how an IFAC Member Body (MB) has been able to design curricula and learning outcomes to create qualifications which cater to business needs. This involved extensive stakeholder analysis with partners of audit firms, member and non-member Chief Executive Officers, heads of accounting and finance, human resources managers, academia and students, as well as consideration of accounting education requirements such as IESs and other qualification frameworks. The result is a progressive achievement model targeting three qualification levels – Certified Business Accountant (CBA), Certified Senior Business Accountant (CSBA), and Chartered Accountant (CA).

Guiding Principles in Practice

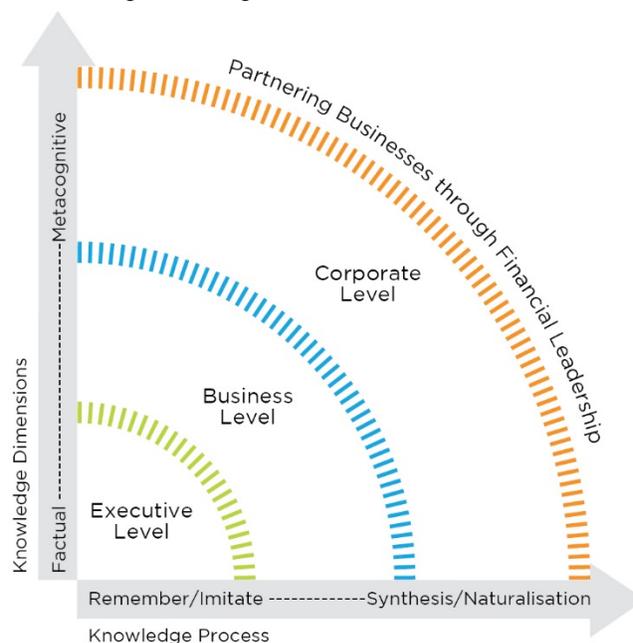
	Commentary
Design	<p>Curriculum form and content defined in consultation with stakeholders</p> <p>Having profiled the desired roles to be performed in business by professional accountants, including the Chartered Accountant, the MB has shaped the form and content of the curriculum with the involvement of industry leaders, students and academia.</p> <p>The resulting curriculum is a three-tier qualification awarding structure – Certified Business Accountant (CBA), Certified Senior Business Accountant (CSBA), and Chartered Accountant (CA). A CBA may expect employment as an entry level Business Accountant, whereas a Chartered Accountant has studied further to acquire key attributes such as astuteness in decision making, organizational skills integrated into strategic decision making and characterized values inspiring excellence in performance with social responsibility.</p> <p>Multiple curriculum levels each addressing relevant learning outcomes at the desired level of complexity to support different job responsibilities</p> <p>The curriculum is designed to take the aspiring professional accountant through the three progressively higher levels of achievement with exit routes based on an individual's career path choice. Phase 1 is the Executive Level, Phase 2 is the Business Level and Phase 3 is the Corporate Level. The qualifications associated with these levels are CBA, CSBA and CA respectively.</p> <p>Each phase comprises of a knowledge pillar, a skills pillar and a personal pillar, and within each pillar there are defined sub-pillars representing individual modules. The levels, pillars and modules are depicted below.</p>

	Knowledge					Skills		Personal
	Financial Accounting & Reporting	Management Accounting & Finance	Taxation & Law	Assurance & Ethics	Management & Contemporary Issues	Communication & People	IT & Systems	Practical Training & Development
Corporate Level	1 Corporate Financial Reporting	2 Corporate Finance and Risk Management	3 Corporate Taxation	4 Corporate Governance, Assurance & Ethics	5 Corporate Strategy & Contemporary Issues	1 Corporate Communication & People Skills	2 Corporate Information Technology & Systems	1 Corporate Practical Training & Development
Business Level	1 Business Financial Reporting	2 Business Management Accounting	3 Business Taxation & Law	4 Business Assurance, Ethics & Audit	5 Business Value Creation	2 Business Communication & People Skills	2 Business Information Technology & Systems	1 Business Value Creation
Executive Level	1 Financial Accounting & Reporting Fundamentals	2 Management Accounting Information	3 Fundamentals of Taxation & Law	4 Processes, Assurance & Ethics	5 Commercial Insight for Management	1 Executive Communication & People Skills	2 Executive Information Technology & Systems	1 Executive Practical Training & Development

The modules are further disaggregated into:

1. Main curriculum areas (knowledge/ skills/ practical training & development), each with a relative weighting of its contribution to the module; and
2. Learning outcomes of main curriculum areas were developed based on the knowledge process & knowledge dimension expected by desired professional profile per curriculum area (see image below).

The progressive nature of the curriculum - from providing the students with the fundamental facts and understanding of each designated core competency at the Executive Level to making them capable of developing balanced solutions to complex unstructured situations - is depicted in the below diagram. This knowledge transformation is consistent with the original work of Anderson, Krathwohl, et al., 2001 on learning, teaching and assessment.



	<p>Aligning of course modules to desired profiles was also done in a methodical manner, so that students are provided with core competency knowledge with a bias for action through a 'Taxonomy of Actions'. This draws from the work arising from the original taxonomy of learning outcomes by Bloom et al. Every effort was taken to develop an action set unique to the profession under each of the designated profiles, leading to learning outcomes.</p> <p>A mandatory online module on "Professional Values, Ethics and Attitudes" was also introduced through the same methodology outlined above as ethics & ethical behavior help to preserve the integrity of the profession while maintaining public trust in the profession at all times.</p>
<p>Assessment</p>	<p>Assessments measure the achievement of learning outcomes defined for each curriculum level</p> <p>Qualification is achieved at each level with the successful completion of the <i>assessment activities</i> defined in each of the knowledge, skills and personal pillars for that level.</p>
<p>Governance</p>	

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