

ACCA Challenge Exam Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is the IIA?

The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) is the acknowledged leader worldwide of the internal audit profession, its global voice, recognized authority, chief advocate, and principal educator, with more than 190,000 members in 170 countries around the world. Typically, members provide assurance and advisory services within the broad spectrum of governance, risk, and control, with responsibilities that may include internal and external auditing, risk management, internal control, information technology audit, education, and security.

2. What is the CIA?

The Certified Internal Auditor® (CIA®) is the premier global certification for all those working in internal audit, regardless of background, sector, or region. It provides recognition and status among peers and principal stakeholders, and identifies individuals as committed and competent internal audit professionals.

3. Why does the IIA want to offer this challenge exam?

The IIA is committed to raising the profile of, and demand for, the internal audit profession. To accomplish this, The IIA works closely with organizations such as ACCA to help the advancement of The IIA and ACCA's members as well as the accountancy and internal audit professions. By offering the challenge exam, The IIA continues to demonstrate the uniqueness of internal auditing as a profession and strengthens its strategic partnership with ACCA.

4. What are the advantages to the ACCA members to take this challenge exam?

The challenge exam will allow qualified ACCA members who currently work in internal audit or plan to work in internal audit in the future, the opportunity to earn the CIA through an expedited route by demonstrating competency in those areas not already covered in the ACCA exams. The ACCA and The IIA believe the challenge exam provides a tremendous opportunity that offers ACCA Members:

- a. Ability to demonstrate their insights and capabilities relating to internal auditing as a distinctive area of expertise.
- b. Access to the globally recognized certification for the professional practice of internal auditing through a single exam customized to reflect knowledge, skills, and abilities already held and demonstrated.
- c. Professional recognition, job enhancement, and career progression.
- d. Ability to obtain CPD/CPE for ACCA's CPD policy through studying for the challenge exam.

5. Will I have the opportunity to take the ACCA challenge exam in the future?

The Challenge Exam is a time bound and limited opportunity. There is no plan to offer the exam again in the foreseeable future.

6. Who is eligible to take the ACCA challenge exam?

Eligible candidates MUST be currently certified ACCA members. Former certified members or those that are current ACCA students are NOT eligible. Individuals that meet any of the following conditions will **not** be permitted to sit for the ACCA Challenge Exam:

- a. Past Due Balance
- b. Delinquent CPD reporting
- c. Have a legal flag on their record

7. What is the experience requirement?

ACCA members are exempt from the experience requirement for the Challenge Exam as members meet the requirement through their ACCA membership.

8. What if I have already been approved for the CIA program and/or completed a CIA exam part?

ACCA Challenge Exam candidates who are already approved into the CIA program (including those that have already completed one or more parts of the CIA exam) will be permitted to apply for the ACCA challenge exam under the following conditions:

- The candidate must notify The IIA by submitting an incident in their CCMS record indicating that they want to participate in the ACCA challenge exam. Please put the words “Admin Request” in the subject line to expedite processing;
- No refunds of any kind (in part or whole) will be issued for any prior payments (this is due to expenses that have already been incurred in the prior program attempt);
- The candidate will retain credit for all previously passed examination parts, should they not pass the ACCA Challenge Exam;
- Candidate will pay FULL PRICE for the ACCA challenge exam application;
- All other eligibility requirements apply.

If the candidate approves the conditions, the candidate must submit an incident in their CCMS record. The certification team will issue a “CIA application expired status” effective immediately, and submit the “passed” form for any exam part that the candidate has previously passed. This will allow the candidate access to the ACCA Challenge Exam application form in the CCMS system. It will take approximately 24 to 48 hours to process the expired status before the candidate will be able to access the ACCA Challenge Exam application.

If the candidate fails the ACCA challenge exam, the candidate will have four (4) years (from the date of the Challenge Exam application approval) to complete all CIA exam parts to obtain their CIA designation.

9. What is the content outline for the challenge exam? The content outline can be found below:

ALL TOPICS TESTED AT PROFICIENCY LEVEL

unless otherwise indicated

I. Mandatory Guidance (40-50%)
A. Definition of Internal Auditing
1. Define purpose, authority, and responsibility of the internal audit activity
B. Code of Ethics
1. Abide by and promote compliance with The IIA Code of Ethics
C. International Standards
1. Comply with The IIA's Attribute Standards
a. Determine if the purpose, authority, and responsibility of the internal audit activity are documented in audit charter, approved by the Board and communicated to the engagement clients
b. Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose, authority, and responsibility of the internal audit activity
2. Maintain independence and objectivity
a. Foster independence
1. Understand organizational independence
2. Recognize the importance of organizational independence
3. Determine if the internal audit activity is properly aligned to achieve organizational independence
b. Foster objectivity
1. Establish policies to promote objectivity
2. Assess individual objectivity
3. Maintain individual objectivity
4. Recognize and mitigate impairments to independence and objectivity
3. Determine if the required knowledge, skills, and competencies are available

a. Understand the knowledge, skills, and competencies that an internal auditor needs to possess
b. Identify the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to fulfill the responsibilities of the internal audit activity
4. Develop and/or procure necessary knowledge, skills and competencies collectively required by the internal audit activity
5. Exercise due professional care
6. Promote continuing professional development
a. Develop and implement a plan for continuing professional development for internal audit staff
b. Enhance individual competency through continuing professional development
7. Promote quality assurance and improvement of the internal audit activity
a. Monitor the effectiveness of the quality assurance and improvement program
b. Report the results of the quality assurance and improvement program to the board or other governing body
c. Conduct quality assurance procedures and recommend improvements to the performance of the internal audit activity
II. Managing the Internal Audit Function (35-45%)
A. Strategic Role of Internal Audit
1. Initiate, manage, be a change catalyst, and cope with change
2. Build and maintain networking with other organization executives and the audit committee
a. Nurture instrumental relations, build bonds, and work with others toward shared goals
3. Organize and lead a team in mapping, analysis, and business process improvement
4. Assess and foster the ethical climate of the board and management
a. Investigate and recommend resolution for ethics/compliance complaints, and determine disposition of ethics violations
b. Maintain and administer business conduct policy (e.g., conflict of interest), and report on compliance
5. Educate senior management and the board on best practices in governance, risk management, control, and compliance
6. Communicate internal audit key performance indicators to senior management and the board on a regular basis
7. Coordinate IA efforts with external auditor, regulatory oversight bodies and other internal assurance functions
8. Assess the adequacy of the performance measurement system, achievement of corporate objective – Awareness Level (A)
B. Operational Role of IA
1. Formulate policies and procedures for the planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring of internal audit operations
2. Review the role of the internal audit function within the risk management framework
3. Direct administrative activities (e.g., budgeting, human resources) of the internal audit department
4. Interview candidates for internal audit positions
5. Report on the effectiveness of corporate risk management processes to senior management and the board
6. Report on the effectiveness of the internal control and risk management frameworks
7. Maintain effective Quality Assurance Improvement Program
C. Establish Risk-Based IA Plan
1. Use market, product, and industry knowledge to identify new internal audit engagement opportunities
2. Use a risk framework to identify sources of potential engagements (e.g., audit universe, audit cycle requirements, management requests, regulatory mandates)

3. Establish a framework for assessing risk
a. Alternative Control Frameworks (Awareness level)
4. Rank and validate risk priorities to prioritize engagements in the audit plan
5. Identify internal audit resource requirements for annual IA plan
6. Communicate areas of significant risk and obtain approval from the board for the annual engagement plan
7. Types of engagements
a. Conduct assurance engagements
a.1 Risk and control self-assessments
a.2 Audits of third parties and contract auditing
a.3 Quality audit engagements
a.4 Due diligence audit engagements
a.5 Security audit engagements
a.6 Privacy audit engagements
a.7 Performance audit engagements (key performance indicators)
a.8 Operational audit engagements (efficiency and effectiveness)
b. Compliance audit engagements
c. Consulting engagements
c.1 Internal control training
c.2 Business process mapping
c.3 Benchmarking
c.4 System development reviews
c.5 Design of performance measurement systems
III. Managing Individual Engagements (5-15%)
A. Communicate Engagement Results
1. Approve engagement report
2. Determine distribution of the report
3. Obtain management response to the report
4. Report outcomes to appropriate parties
B. Monitor Engagement Outcomes
1. Identify appropriate method to monitor engagement outcomes
2. Monitor engagement outcomes and conduct appropriate follow-up by the internal audit activity
3. Conduct follow-up and report on management's response to internal audit recommendations

10. How do I prepare for the challenge exam?

As part of the exam bundle, The IIA will provide the CIA Challenge Exam Study Guide in a downloadable e-book format that covers only the content that is covered by the challenge exam. This review material will be delivered in an electronic download format within seven (7) to ten (10) business days after approval of application and confirmation of payment. Review materials will only be available for download in English until 15 September 2018.

11. How long does it take to complete the exam?

The ACCA challenge exam contains 125 multiple choice questions. Candidates will have 2 hours and 30 minutes to complete the exam. Candidates can only take the exam one time.

12. Where will I take the exam?

The exam will be delivered through computer based testing at any one of hundreds of Pearson VUE test centers around the world during the month of October. Candidates testing in China must sit for the exam 27 through 31 October 2018. To locate the center nearest you, visit the [Pearson VUE](#) web site. If you do not have a test center in your city / province, you are permitted to take the exam at the location nearest you.

13. Do I have to be a member of my local IIA to take the challenge exam?

If you are not already a member of The IIA either through your local IIA Institute or as a member-at-large, the exam bundle will include membership of at least 12 months. Some local IIA Institutes may offer a longer term of membership depending on the local membership year. If you are already a member, there will be a discount on the bundle of \$200 USD.

14. How much will the challenge exam cost?

The exam bundle will cost \$1,295 USD non IIA member and \$1,095 USD if the candidate is already a member of The IIA. The bundle will include the following components:

- a. CIA exam application fee (normally \$115 USD member/\$230 USD non-member)
- b. CIA exam registration fee (normally \$740 USD member/\$1,085 USD non-member)
- c. The IIA's ACCA CIA Challenge Exam Study Guide in downloadable e-book format (normally \$500 USD member/\$600 USD non-member)
- d. Membership in The IIA. Candidates who are already a member of The IIA received a discount of \$200 USD on the bundle.

15. Can I just pay for the application and exam registration without purchasing the review materials and membership?

No. The challenge exam is only being offered as a bundle. Candidates may choose to take the exam through the normal three-part exam process if they wish to only pay for exam application and registration fees.

16. What language will the challenge exam be offered in?

The challenge exam will only be offered in English only.

17. What if I do not pass the challenge exam? Can I retake it?

No. The challenge exam will only be offered through Computer Based Testing (CBT) during the month of October 2018. Each candidate will be allowed only one (1) attempt to pass the exam.

18. When can I apply for the challenge exam?

Application for the challenge exam will be available from the announcement of the ACCA Challenge Exam until 31 August 2018. The Exam Registration window will be open on 15 June until 30 September. Candidates testing in China must sit for the exam 27 through 31 October 2018.

19. What happens after I submit my application?

Upon submission of your application form, your information will be shared with ACCA to validate that you meet the criteria to be eligible to sit for the exam. If the ACCA does not approve your application, you will not be allowed to sit for the examination and no refund will be provided. The sponsoring association is solely responsible for the approval of applications. The IIA cannot provide insight as to why an application was denied. If you are unsure if you will qualify, please contact your sponsoring association directly before submitting this form. One year's membership of your local affiliate office is included in the price, therefore your information will be shared with your local IIA Affiliate office in order to fulfil your membership benefits.

- a. Please note The IIA is not responsible for applications being approved or denied, and as such will not be able to answer questions as to why an application was approved or denied. If your application is denied, you must contact the ACCA directly.

20. When can I take the challenge exam?

The challenge exam will be offered ONLY during the month of October 2018. Candidates can schedule on any available date and time at their preferred test center between 15 June and 15 October 2018. Candidates testing in China must sit for the exam 27 through 31 October 2018.

21. Where will the challenge exam be offered?

ACCA candidates will be able to take the challenge exam in available Pearson VUE test centers which can be found [here](#).

22. How do I apply and register to take the challenge exam?

Candidates for the exam will need to create a record in The IIA's [Certification Candidate Management System](#) (CCMS). Please note that if you already have a candidate record in CCMS, use that record. **DO NOT** create a second record. If you need assistance with logging into CCMS, please contact our Customer Relations Department at CustomerRelations@theiia.org or +1-407-937-1111.

- a. Once you have logged into CCMS, click on the COMPLETE A FORM LINK on the left side navigation panel.
- b. If you are currently a member of The IIA, locate and complete the ACCA Challenge – Application form. If you are not a member of The IIA, select the ACCA Challenge – Application – (Non-Member) form. Click on the form title to open the form. Complete the entire form and submit with payment.
- c. Upon completion you will receive an automated email confirming your form submission. Once your application has been processed, you will receive another automated email confirming whether your application has been approved or denied. This email will provide approved candidates with further instructions on how to register for your exam.

23. What documentation will I need to provide in order to take the ACCA challenge exam? How do I submit the documentation to The IIA?

Once you have submitted your application with your ACCA membership number, you will need to submit **ONLY** the completed **Character Reference Form** and **Photo ID** to The IIA's global certifications department. Your ACCA status will need to be approved by the ACCA before you can be considered an eligible candidate to sit for the exam.

- a. Please click [HERE](#) to access the character reference form and photo ID information (all other information does not apply to ACCA Challenge Exam candidates).
- b. To submit your documentation to The IIA for review, you will need to access the certification document upload portal which is available [HERE](#).

24. What happens if I apply for the ACCA Challenge exam and I do not meet the eligibility requirements?

If it is determined during the validation process that you do not meet the eligibility requirements, your application will be denied. NO REFUNDS will be provided for candidates that are determined not to be eligible.

25. How will I receive the customized review materials to prepare for the challenge exam?

Within 7 to 10 days of program application approval and payment confirmation, you will receive an email with instructions on how to set up your CIA ACCA Challenge Exam Study Guide online account. Once the account is set up, you can download the e-book and begin your studies.

26. How will I become a member of The IIA if I am not already a member?

Once you have registered and paid for the program, your information will be shared with your local IIA Affiliate for the purpose of processing your membership. Your membership will begin within thirty (30) to forty-five (45) days of application approval.

27. What are the CPE reporting requirements for the CIA if I achieve it through the challenge exam?

The CPE reporting requirements are the same for all CIA's and can be found [here](#). Candidates who earn the CIA will be awarded 80 CPE hours and will not be required to report CPE until January 1, 2020.

28. When will I have to report CPE's for the first time?

Your first CPE report will be due 31 December 2020.