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CBA STANDARD

# Accounting Manager

Accounting · 5 weighted domains · 30 learning objectives

Version 8.1

This edition published September 2026

## About this standard

This standard defines what competent practice consists of in the discipline set out under Scope below. It divides the discipline into weighted domains and states, for each domain, the learning objectives a competent practitioner meets. It is one of the CBA Standards, which the Corporate Business Alliance maintains across finance, accounting, management and technology.

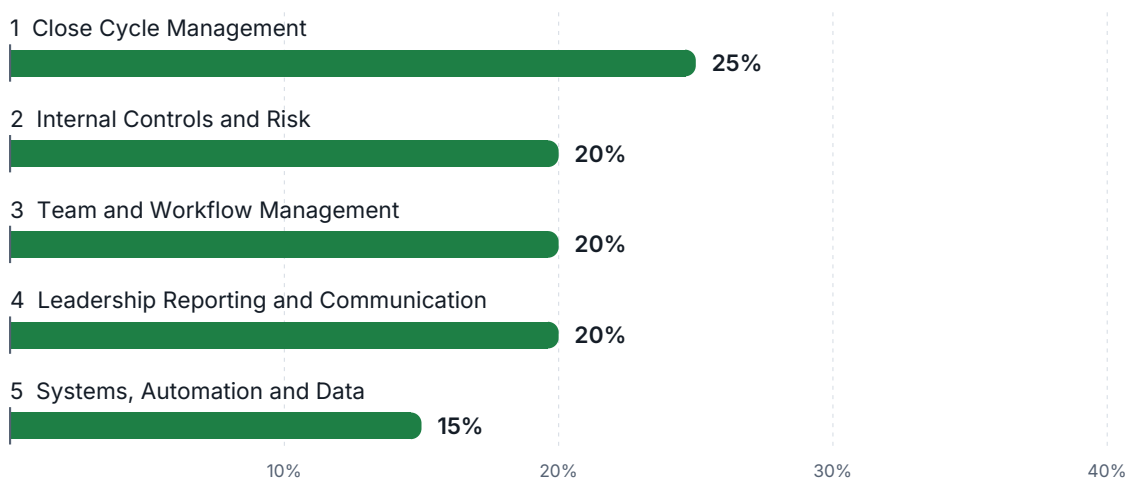
The standard is written for employers defining what a role requires, for training providers designing courses to a published specification, and for practitioners planning their own development.

Each domain carries a weight: its share of the standard, and of the examination for the CBA-CAM credential, which is assessed against it. The version number rises whenever a change would alter what competence in the discipline means, and every credential records the version its holder met.

## Scope

A professional certification for accountants stepping up to run an accounting function: managing the close cycle, designing internal controls, leading a finance team, reporting to leadership, and selecting and improving accounting systems.

### Weighting by domain



## Domains and learning objectives

### Domain 1

25% of the standard

### Close Cycle Management

- 1.1 Construct a month-end close calendar with task dependencies, owners, deadlines and quality gates
- 1.2 Distinguish between hard-close, soft-close and continuous-close approaches and select the appropriate model for a given organisation
- 1.3 Evaluate accrual, prepayment, provision and cut-off procedures for completeness and consistency at period end
- 1.4 Interpret reconciliation ageing and unresolved-item reports to prioritise close-cycle risk

- 1.5 Select actions to recover a slipping close, including re-sequencing tasks, applying materiality thresholds and escalating blockers
- 1.6 Calculate close-cycle performance measures such as days to close, late adjustment counts and post-close correction rates

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**Domain 2**

20% of the standard

**Internal Controls and Risk**

- 2.1 Distinguish preventive, detective and corrective controls and match each to a given process risk
- 2.2 Design segregation of duties for payments, payroll, journals and master-data changes, including compensating controls for small teams
- 2.3 Evaluate the severity of a control failure and select an appropriate response, including remediation and disclosure to leadership
- 2.4 Identify fraud indicators in accounts payable, payroll, expenses and revenue processes
- 2.5 Interpret an exception report or audit finding and prioritise remediation actions
- 2.6 Select appropriate approval thresholds, system access rights and documentation standards for a described process

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**Domain 3**

20% of the standard

**Team and Workflow Management**

- 3.1 Allocate tasks across a team using skill, capacity and development criteria rather than habit
- 3.2 Design a preparer-reviewer hierarchy with clear evidence standards for review
- 3.3 Evaluate individual and team performance using workload, quality and timeliness indicators
- 3.4 Select coaching, training or escalation responses to described performance problems
- 3.5 Distinguish effective delegation from abdication and micromanagement in given scenarios
- 3.6 Interpret capacity data to justify hiring, outsourcing or automation decisions

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**Domain 4**

20% of the standard

**Leadership Reporting and Communication**

- 4.1 Construct a monthly management pack with an appropriate structure for a described audience
  - 4.2 Interpret variances between actual, budget and prior period and draft commentary that explains cause rather than restating numbers
  - 4.3 Select key indicators for cash, working capital and profitability suitable for a given business model
  - 4.4 Distinguish decision-useful commentary from noise, and materiality-driven detail from clutter
  - 4.5 Evaluate requests from leadership for new reports and negotiate scope, frequency and deadlines
  - 4.6 Calculate common working capital and liquidity measures from summarised financial data
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**Domain 5**

15% of the standard

**Systems, Automation and Data**

- 5.1 Construct requirements and a weighted scoring model for selecting accounting software or add-on tools
- 5.2 Evaluate a chart of accounts and dimension design for reporting and consolidation needs
- 5.3 Distinguish tasks suited to automation or AI assistance from those requiring accountant judgement and review
- 5.4 Select data-integrity practices for spreadsheets and system integrations, including reconciliation of interfaces
- 5.5 Interpret a migration or implementation plan and identify cutover, parallel-run and data-quality risks
- 5.6 Evaluate the controls needed around automated postings and AI-assisted outputs before reliance

**Competence at award**

What a holder of the CBA-CAM credential has demonstrated.

- Plan, run and progressively compress a month-end and year-end close using a documented close calendar, task ownership and quality gates.
- Design and evaluate internal controls, including segregation of duties in small teams, and respond appropriately when a control fails.
- Allocate work, build review hierarchies and manage capacity, performance and development across an accounting team, including remote and outsourced staff.
- Construct management reporting packs and variance commentary that give leadership decision-ready information on time.
- Run a structured selection and implementation process for accounting systems, integrations and automation, including sensible use of AI assistance.
- Measure the health of an accounting function with metrics such as close duration, error rates, reconciliation ageing and rework, and lead improvement cycles.

**Recognition at Practitioner level**

The CBA-CAM credential is awarded at Practitioner level of the CBA Competency Framework, which evidences that the holder can carry out the core tasks of the discipline.

Awarded on the examination and 4 assessed workbooks of applied work.

**Who the standard is written for****Senior accountant stepping up**

An accountant with several years of preparation and reconciliation experience who is about to take, or has recently taken, first responsibility for a close cycle, a reporting pack or a small team.

**New accounting manager or team lead**

A recently promoted manager who learned accounting formally but is now improvising the management side: workload allocation, review hierarchies, controls, and reporting upwards to a CFO or owner.

**Practice or outsourcing supervisor**

A supervisor in an accounting practice, shared service centre or outsourcing firm who runs closes and reporting for multiple client entities and needs a disciplined, repeatable operating method.

## Appendix: glossary of accounting terms

Terms used across the accounting standards, as CBA defines them.

### Accounts payable

Amounts owed to suppliers for goods and services received on credit, recorded as a current liability until paid.

### Accounts receivable

Amounts owed to the business by customers for goods and services delivered on credit, recorded as a current asset until collected.

### Accrual

An expense or income recognised in the period to which it relates, before the invoice is received or issued. It is reversed when the actual document is recorded.

### Accrual basis of accounting

Recognising transactions when they occur rather than when cash changes hands. IFRS financial statements, other than the cash flow statement, are prepared on this basis.

### Adjusting event

Under IAS 10, an event after the reporting period that provides evidence of conditions existing at the reporting date, and so requires the amounts in the financial statements to be adjusted.

### Amortised cost

Under IFRS 9, the measurement of a financial asset or liability at its initial amount, adjusted for repayments and for interest calculated using the effective interest method, less any loss allowance.

### Asset

Under the IFRS Conceptual Framework, a present economic resource controlled by an entity as a result of past events, where the resource is a right with the potential to produce economic benefits.

### Audit trail

The documented path from a figure in the financial statements back through the ledger to the source transaction and its approval.

### Balance sheet reconciliation

Agreeing a balance sheet account to independent supporting evidence — a bank statement, a sub-ledger, a schedule — and explaining and resolving any difference.

### Chart of accounts

The structured list of every account in the general ledger, with codes that determine how transactions are classified and reported.

### Close calendar

The schedule of tasks, owners, dependencies and deadlines for completing the month-end or year-end close.

### Consolidation

Combining the financial statements of a parent and its subsidiaries into those of a single economic entity, eliminating intra-group balances and transactions. The principles are set out in IFRS 10.

### Contingent liability

Under IAS 37, a possible obligation whose existence depends on uncertain future events, or a present obligation not recognised because an outflow is not probable or cannot be measured reliably. It is disclosed

rather than recognised.

**Contract liability**

Under IFRS 15, an entity's obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer for which it has already received, or is owed, consideration. Often called deferred revenue.

**Control account**

A general ledger account whose balance summarises the detail held in a sub-ledger, such as the receivables control account. It should agree to the sub-ledger total.

**Credit note**

A document issued to a customer that reduces the amount they owe, for example after a return or a pricing error.

**Cut-off**

Recording transactions in the correct period, so that revenue, costs, receivables and payables at period-end reflect only what occurred up to that date.

**Deferred tax**

Under IAS 12, tax payable or recoverable in future periods because of temporary differences between the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities and their tax bases.

**Depreciation**

The systematic allocation of the depreciable amount of an asset over its useful life, recognising the consumption of its economic benefits.

**Derecognition**

Removing a previously recognised asset or liability from the balance sheet, for example when it is sold, settled or expires.

**Expected credit loss (ECL)**

Under IFRS 9, the probability-weighted estimate of credit losses over the relevant period, recognised as a loss allowance against financial assets such as trade receivables.

**Fair value**

Under IFRS 13, the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

**Financial statements**

The structured report of an entity's financial position and performance: a statement of financial position, a statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, a statement of changes in equity, a statement of cash flows, and notes.

**Four-eyes principle**

A control requiring that a transaction or journal be prepared by one person and reviewed or approved by another before it takes effect.

**Functional currency**

Under IAS 21, the currency of the primary economic environment in which an entity operates. Transactions in other currencies are foreign currency transactions.

**General ledger**

The complete record of an entity's accounts, from which the trial balance and financial statements are prepared.

**Going concern**

The assumption that an entity will continue in operation for the foreseeable future. Management must assess it, and disclose material uncertainties that cast significant doubt on it.

**Goodwill**

Under IFRS 3, the excess of the consideration paid in a business combination over the fair value of the identifiable net assets acquired. It is not amortised but tested for impairment at least annually.

**Impairment**

Under IAS 36, the amount by which an asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount — the higher of fair value less costs of disposal and value in use.

**Intercompany elimination**

Removing balances and transactions between members of a group on consolidation, so that the group's statements show only dealings with outside parties.

**Internal control**

A process designed to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are authorised, recorded accurately and completely, and that assets are safeguarded.

**International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)**

The accounting standards issued by the International Accounting Standards Board, together with the International Accounting Standards (IAS) it has adopted, used for financial reporting in many jurisdictions.

**Journal approval**

The review and authorisation of a manual journal entry by someone other than its preparer, with evidence of what was checked.

**Journal entry**

A record of a transaction in the ledger, with equal debits and credits, a date, a description and supporting evidence.

**Lease liability**

Under IFRS 16, a lessee's obligation to make lease payments, measured at the present value of the payments not yet made.

**Liability**

Under the IFRS Conceptual Framework, a present obligation of an entity to transfer an economic resource as a result of past events.

**Management accounts**

Internal financial reports prepared to support decisions, typically monthly. They are not governed by IFRS, but should be prepared consistently and reconciled to the ledger.

**Materiality**

The threshold above which an omission or misstatement could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users of financial information. It is judged by both size and nature.

**Month-end close**

The process of recording, reconciling and reviewing a month's transactions so that reliable management accounts can be produced.

**Non-adjusting event**

Under IAS 10, an event after the reporting period that indicates conditions arising after the reporting date. It is disclosed where material but does not change the amounts reported.

**Non-controlling interest**

The equity in a subsidiary not attributable, directly or indirectly, to the parent. It is presented within equity in the consolidated statements.

**Performance obligation**

Under IFRS 15, a promise in a contract to transfer a distinct good or service to a customer. Revenue is recognised as each obligation is satisfied.

**Prepayment**

An amount paid in advance for goods or services to be received in a later period, held as an asset and released to expense as the benefit is consumed.

**Presentation currency**

Under IAS 21, the currency in which financial statements are presented, which may differ from the functional currency.

**Provision**

Under IAS 37, a liability of uncertain timing or amount, recognised when there is a present obligation from a past event, an outflow is probable and the amount can be estimated reliably.

**Recognition**

Including an item in the statement of financial position or of financial performance because it meets the definition of an element and the recognition criteria.

**Reconciliation**

Comparing two sets of records that should agree and investigating every difference until it is explained.

**Recurring journal**

A journal prepared on a fixed basis each period from a schedule — depreciation, prepayment releases, standard accruals — so that at close it needs review rather than construction.

**Related party**

Under IAS 24, a person or entity closely connected to the reporting entity, such as key management personnel or entities under common control. Transactions with related parties must be disclosed.

**Revenue recognition**

Under IFRS 15, a five-step model: identify the contract, identify the performance obligations, determine the transaction price, allocate it to the obligations, and recognise revenue as each is satisfied.

**Right-of-use asset**

Under IFRS 16, a lessee's asset representing its right to use an underlying asset for the lease term. It is usually depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and the asset's useful life.

**Segregation of duties**

Dividing responsibilities for authorising, recording and holding assets among different people, so that no one person can both commit and conceal an error or fraud.

**Sub-ledger**

A detailed ledger for a class of transactions — receivables, payables, fixed assets — whose total is posted to a control account in the general ledger.

**Subsidiary**

Under IFRS 10, an entity controlled by another entity, the parent. Control rests on power over the investee, exposure to variable returns and the ability to use that power to affect them.

**Suspense account**

A temporary account holding entries that cannot yet be classified. A balance left in suspense at period-end is an unresolved error.

**Three-way match**

A payables control that agrees the purchase order, the goods received record and the supplier invoice before an invoice is approved for payment.

**Transaction price**

Under IFRS 15, the amount of consideration an entity expects to be entitled to in exchange for transferring promised goods or services, including estimates of variable consideration.

**Trial balance**

A list of every general ledger account and its balance at a date, whose debits and credits must be equal. It is the starting point for preparing financial statements.

**Useful life**

The period over which an asset is expected to be available for use, or the number of units it is expected to produce. It determines the depreciation charge.

**Variable consideration**

Under IFRS 15, consideration that can change — discounts, rebates, bonuses, penalties. It is included in the transaction price only to the extent a significant reversal is highly unlikely.

## Using this publication

### Citation

Corporate Business Alliance (2026). Accounting Manager: CBA Standard, version 8.1. London: Corporate Business Alliance.

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### Publisher

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