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QUALIFICATION: Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting (SAQA ID: 108930; NQF Level 8)
MODE OF DELIVERY: DISTANCE LEARNING ONLINE

**This document should be read together with the
information at <http://OnlineCTA.milpark.ac.za>**

DESCRIPTION

PROGRAMME PURPOSE

The Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting (PGDip (Accounting)) is designed for graduates who would like to study further at a postgraduate level with the goal of ultimately qualifying as a Chartered Accountant (CA(SA)).

The PGDip (Accounting) is designed to:

- Enhance students' employability and entrepreneurial ability
- Strengthen, deepen and synthesise students' knowledge of accounting disciplines
- Prepare students for a career as proficient Chartered Accountants.

The qualification is aligned with the competency framework and curriculum requirements of the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA). It is also designed to prepare students to write SAICA's first qualifying examination (ITC) in partial completion of qualifying as a Chartered Accountant. The PGDip (Accounting) focuses on areas that have not been covered at an undergraduate level, and revises and integrates those that have.

The PGDip (Accounting) has four compulsory modules, namely Financial Reporting, Taxation, Management Accounting & Finance, and Corporate Governance & Auditing.

PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this programme, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of accounting disciplines through critical and creative thought, problem-solving and holistic analysis in an innovative and changing environment.

- Apply Generally Accepted Accounting Practice [GAAP] (primarily International Financial Reporting Standards [IFRS]) in preparing and analysing individual and group financial statements.
- Apply management accounting and financial management principles in order to provide useful and context-specific advice that assists in financial decision-making.
- Apply advanced knowledge of the Income Tax Act, the VAT Act, the Estate Duty Act and SARS' Practice Notes to calculate taxable income and tax liabilities and provide detailed explanations of appropriate tax principles.
- Apply advanced knowledge of external auditing, including taking account of the legal and regulatory environment that governs auditors.
- Demonstrate an advanced understanding of ethical behaviour required of a chartered accountant and a citizen.
- Apply advanced knowledge of business risk management, corporate governance and strategy.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Module name	Compulsory/Elective	Credits
Financial Reporting FREP01-8	Compulsory	30
Taxation TAXA01-8	Compulsory	30
Management Accounting & Finance MACF01-8	Compulsory	30
Corporate Governance & Auditing CGAU01-8	Compulsory	30

MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

Financial Reporting FREP01-8

This module focuses on the advanced application of Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (GAAP), primarily International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), at an advanced level, in preparing, critically evaluating and interpreting financial statements. This includes content relating to all aspects of businesses' financial statements, both at an individual financial statement level and at a group financial statement level. The module aims to develop students' conceptual reasoning and analysis skills through the application of financial reporting principles to authentic business and economic scenarios in order that students are prepared for the level of problem-solving, creativity, learning, resilience and adaptation required in the working world for them to lead and add value. The module prepares students to be effective financial accountants as an integral part of performing the role of an entry-level chartered accountant.

Taxation TAXA01-8

This module focuses on the advanced application of taxes and duties levied in accordance with the Income Tax Act, the Estate Duty Act, the Value-Added Tax Act and SARS' practice notes. This includes content relating to taxation of companies, trusts and individuals. The module aims to develop students' conceptual reasoning and analysis skills through the application of taxation principles to authentic business and economic scenarios in order that students are prepared for the level of problem-solving, learning, resilience and adaptation required in the working world for them to lead and add value. The module equips students with a broad and detailed knowledge of taxation as an integral part of performing the role of an entry-level chartered accountant.

Management Accounting & Finance MAFI01-8

This module focuses on providing practical tools to support applied and advanced analytical reasoning and contribute to effective financial management and decision-making in the context of real-world scenarios. The module draws on a broad understanding of the economy and risk management, and includes content related to financial decision-making, financial structuring, budgeting and valuations. The module aims to develop students' conceptual reasoning and analysis skills through the application of management accounting and finance principles to authentic business and economic scenarios in order that students are prepared for the level of problem-solving, creativity, learning, resilience and adaptation required in the working world them to lead and add value. The module prepares students to be effective decision-makers and financial managers as an integral part of performing the role of an entry-level chartered accountant.

Corporate Governance & Auditing CGAU01-8

This module provides a comprehensive background in the external audit process (including different types of external audits), corporate governance and company-related legislation that can be applied to various business scenarios. The content focuses on the audit process, computer auditing, the legal and regulatory environment and corporate governance. The module aims to develop students' conceptual reasoning and analysis skills through the application of corporate governance and auditing principles to authentic business and economic scenarios in order that students are prepared for the level of problem-solving, creativity, learning, resilience, ethical behaviour and adaptation required for them to lead and add value in the working world. The module prepares students to be an effective external auditor as an integral part of performing the role of an entry-level chartered accountant.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum admission requirement for the PGDip (Accounting) is an appropriate Bachelor of Commerce degree, Advanced Diploma or equivalent. The qualification should include sufficient and appropriate study of accounting specialist knowledge to NQF level 7, in the following disciplines:

- Financial reporting/accounting
- Management accounting
- Financial management
- Taxation
- External auditing.

For a qualification to be considered “appropriate”, it would usually have been obtained from a SAICA-accredited institution. Meeting the minimum admission criteria does not lead to automatic acceptance. A limited number of students are enrolled each year according to an analysis of their academic history and propensity for success (factors considered are listed below), the institution's enrolment plan and the available capacity in respect of teaching infrastructure and human resources.

Students will be selected based on a combination of the following criteria:

- Average mark across major NQF 7 modules in the undergraduate degree
- Time taken to complete the undergraduate degree
- Any academic inactivity in accounting-related studies
- Average mark across modules if previously attempted a PGDip (Accounting)/CTA programme.

As this is an online programme, there is important IT hardware and software to which students must have access. Specifics are listed in the section “Minimum IT Requirements”.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications:

In exceptional cases, admission may take place via RPL. RPL applicants must have a minimum of 10 years of employment experience in the field of accounting and must be able to demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of and application of all relevant legislation (tax, accounting, auditing and governance).

RPL applicants would need to provide:

- a detailed curriculum vitae; and
- a one-page statement explaining how the above criteria are met.

In addition, an applicant may be required to present him/herself for an interview with the Head of the Programme. RPL applicants may also be required to prove their competence via an admission test.

Other certificates

Any applicant who has a certificate other than a South African National Senior Certificate must provide:

- a SAQA Certificate of Equivalence, if they want to enrol for a Higher Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Diploma or Postgraduate qualification (www.saqa.org.za)
- or a USAF Exemption Certificate, if they want to enrol for a Bachelor’s degree (<https://mb.usaf.ac.za/>).

RULES OF PROGRESSION

To complete the PGDip (Accounting), all four modules need to be passed.

To progress to SAICA’s ITC, all four modules need to be passed in the same exam sitting.

DURATION

The programme can be completed in a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years.

To complete the programme in the minimum one-year duration, a full workload is required with all four modules taken concurrently.

A full workload is ± 40 hours per week and is in line with other distance and contact institutions' one-year CTA programmes.

Students have a choice with reference to workload, depending on the time available for studies on a weekly basis. The workload is completely flexible and can be inside and/or outside business hours.

If a student cannot commit to a full workload, the programme is also offered as a half workload (± 20 hours per week), in a minimum duration of two years. Two concurrent modules are taken in year 1 (MACF01-8 and CGAU01-8) and two concurrent modules are taken in year 2 (FREPO1-8 and TAXA01-8). To progress to SAICA's ITC, all four modules need to be written and passed at the end of year 2 in the same exam sitting (irrespective of prior results).

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Milpark provides students with materials, resources, formative assessments (including online tests and quizzes), discussion opportunities and a number of administrative services as part of the *myMilpark* and *myCourses* online tuition and support environments. Course materials contain links to additional external resources in the form of links to downloadable documents, websites and videos.

Having access to the above online facilities is essential for efficient communication, learning and success. You will need continuous (daily) access to study, using the resources mentioned above, and to submit and receive your assignments.

Minimum IT requirements

1. A PC or laptop (a tablet and/or a smartphone alone is insufficient)
2. Reliable internet access with sufficient data (at least 10 GB per month)
3. Chrome web browser
4. Microsoft Word and Excel
5. PDF Viewer
6. Ability to scan and upload documents
7. Email and a mobile phone
8. Webcam and a microphone.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Library access

The Milpark Library provides access to e-books in a virtual library called Cyberlibris (Scholartext). Lecturers may create smart bookshelves per course or module for students to access (these shelves can contain prescribed and recommended books). Students can also create their own personal smart bookshelves containing resources for their studies. Having access to a digital library means that thousands of students can access books and resources from anywhere at the same time online. There is no need to do reservations and requests, and no limit on the time a student has to access a book. With the implementation of Cyberlibris, students also have access to full-text resources via ProQuest (global), Ebsco (global) and Sabinet (South African publications) to assist with research and to enrich their learning experience. Access to the Library is included in the module fee.

Tutor

Comprehensive student support services are available. Students are provided with administrative support by Student Services. To assist with understanding content, students have access to tutors whom they can contact individually. Students who experience study and/or personal problems have access to a student counsellor. All support services are available to registered students via *myMilpark (myCourses)*.

ASSESSMENT

Each module is assessed via four written tests and one final exam. These are usually written at venues and are invigilated but, from time to time, they may also be written remotely and/or via proctoring. Dates will be communicated to students at the start of the year. How tests/exams are written is communicated at least four weeks before each assessment.

Students need to participate in specific online forums and live online sessions for each module to meet due performance (DP) requirements.

Students will write a final, summative assessment at the end of the year, which contributes 60% towards the final mark. Students need to obtain a sub-minimum mark of 40% in the final, summative assessment and an overall mark of 50% in order to pass each module.

CERTIFICATION

On successful completion of the qualification, the student will receive a Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting, NQF Level 8 (credits: 120). The Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting is accredited by the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA).

FURTHER STUDIES

The programme is at NQF level 8 and it will provide for articulation options into NQF level 9 programmes.

- Successful completion of the PGDip (Accounting) in one sitting allows students to write SAICA's first qualifying examination, namely the Initial Test of Competence (ITC), in partial completion of the Chartered Accounting qualification (other requirements for the Chartered Accounting qualification are appropriate work experience and specialist study towards SAICA's second qualifying examination).
- The completion of the PGDip (Accounting) meets the minimum requirements for admission to a cognate coursework or research Bachelor of Commerce Honours or Master of Commerce or Business at NQF level 9. Potential Master of Commerce specialisations may include Financial Accounting and Reporting, Tax, Finance, Corporate Governance and Auditing. Other wider articulation opportunities also include areas of management and leadership such as Milpark's Master of Business Administration.

PRICING

All module fees include one round of formative and summative assessments (supplementary examinations excluded). Module fees do not include the cost of prescribed textbooks, which will be for students' own account. The prescribed booklist will be available on *myMilpark* on registration.

DISCLAIMER

The content of this brochure is accurate at the time of going to print. Milpark Education reserves the right to change the programme content due to changes in legislation, market requirements and other reasons. Notice of such changes will be published on our website.

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