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Information Guide for the Practical Experience Assurance Programme



Royal Netherlands
Institute of Chartered
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NBA

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1 | Introduction

This information guide contains all information that you will need regarding the practical experience Assurance programme. This programme is intended to train you for the position of accountant, meaning that you are then authorised to audit historical financial statements and reports, such as the annual accounts of a company.

The practical experience Assurance programme is directed at the broad assurance function. The focus lies on the acquisition of audit skills. You are trained to be able to audit the annual accounts of a broad range of companies and organisations. The extent to which you are able to provide assurance is expressed in the audit report that you issue in your role as external accountant.

During the practical experience programme you demonstrate that you are able to apply your knowledge of accounting and audit theory to various situations that you encounter professionally. In addition, you show that you have a correct professional attitude. The real world, after all, often differs from conventional patterns, and you are the one who needs to stand firm in circumstances that may be difficult. This relates not just to the advice as such that you render, but also to how you present it.

During the course of the programme, you will be judged on the basis of your personal development. You therefore start the programme with a zero measurement, which is followed by regular appraisals based on assignments and assessments. At the end of the programme you will operate as an entry level accountant. If you are prepared to invest in yourself, then we hope to welcome you in three years as a new member of the NBA, the Dutch Institute of Chartered Accountants.

1.1 The Practical Experience Assurance Programme

The educational model

The practical experience Assurance programme is based on the NBA Regulation Governing the Professional Profiles 2015 and the CEA Learning Outcomes 2016 (see www.ceaweb.nl). These profiles and learning outcomes constitute the basis for the educational programmes that lead to accreditation as Accounting Consultant (AA) and Registered Accountant (RA).

The practical experience Assurance programme is being offered as from 1 January 2017. The programme normally involves three years and is intended to prepare candidates for the accountancy profession, with the authority to audit annual accounts. The maximum period allowed for the programme is seven years (including interruptions).

The theoretical part of the programme is only offered by the academic universities that have an RA programme. One or more professional universities (HBO) may in the future offer a similar programme for the AA title. Information on this is available at the Education & Practical Experience Programme Department of the NBA.

In principle, the practical experience Assurance Programme takes place parallel with the post-initial theory programme, but it may also be followed afterwards. Students who follow the part-time theoretical programme (for example via Nyenrode) can already commence with the practical experience programme as from the start of their master's programme. The intention is to integrate the theoretical and practical experience programmes. In that way synergy benefits will be created for the trainees (who are also university students), and the quality of the entire educational programme, involving both theory and practice, will be optimised.

1.2 Structure of this information guide

Chapter 2 of this information guide makes clear that, to a large extent, you direct your own practical experience programme. You yourself decide what assignments you will describe, what learning outcomes you will focus on and when, what dilemmas you will tackle, and so on.

The learning process is cyclical. You constantly gain new insights, which you then use for new assignments. It is therefore important that you thoroughly evaluate the assignments that you have already completed and that you can identify the related learning points. You are thus expected to direct this cyclical learning process because at the end of the programme you will operate as an entry level accountant. Chapter 3 describes what is meant by an entry level accountant. To make your learning process tangible, the programme involves reporting, training events, intervision and a thesis. These elements of the practical experience programme are described in Chapter 4. This includes a description of what is meant by each of these elements and what criteria must be met. Chapter 5 describes the contents of the traineeship programme. Your learning process must at least relate to the work domains 'Audits of Annual accounts' and 'Other Assurance Assignments', but it may also involve other activities. Chapter 6 then discusses the breakdown of the traineeship programme over the various training years. Your learning process involves a standard period of three traineeship years, and during the last year of the programme you will be functioning as the entry level for an accountant.

Chapter 7 discusses the closing element of the practical experience Assurance programme: the integrated final examination. This examination must make clear that you are able to apply your knowledge of accounting and audit theory in concrete professional situations at entry accountant level. Next, Chapter 8 describes the various components that your portfolio is made up of. Chapter 9 identifies the laws and regulations that the practical experience programme is based on. Chapter 10 makes clear that the board of the NBA is responsible, under the Accountancy Profession Act, for the practical experience programmes. The NBA board has delegated this responsibility to a considerable extent to the NBA Internship Council (Raad voor de Praktijkopleidingen). Chapter 11 indicates that the CEA maintains supervision over the practical experience programmes. These programmes must comply with the CEA learning outcomes. Chapter 12 explains that the NBA Internship Council has delegated important authorities to the internship offices. The internship offices appoint the mentors and reviewers. Chapter 13 identifies the requirements that mentors must meet, while Chapter 14 lists the requirements applying for reviewers. The internship office also decides whether a specific work setting is suited to serve as a traineeship location. That is discussed in Chapter 15.

Chapter 16 addresses the practical experience Assurance programme agreement, and Chapter 17 discusses the acceleration rule.

The table below shows the structure of the practical experience Assurance programme over the three years:

First year	Second year	Third year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero measurement and personal development plan (PDP) • Mid-year reporting • Annual reporting • 3 training days • 2 intervision meetings (can be part of the programme) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual plan • Mid-year reporting • Annual reporting • ICAIS assignment • 3 training days • 2 intervision meetings (can be part of the programme) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual plan • Mid-year reporting • Annual reporting • 3 training days • Thesis • Integrated final examination

1.3 Learning outcomes, work domains and professional products

As mentioned above, the Accountancy Programme Learning Outcomes Committee (in Dutch: *Commissie Eindtermen Accountantsopleiding, CEA*) has established learning outcomes for the accountancy programmes. The report that identifies the learning outcomes can be found on the CEA website (www.ceaweb.nl). These learning outcomes, both for the theoretical and the practical experience programme, describe concisely the knowledge, skills and professional attitude that you are expected to possess at the end of the educational programme as entry level accountant. The committee distinguishes in this regard between subject-related learning outcomes and generic learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes: concise descriptions of the knowledge, insights and skills that a trainee must minimally possess at the end of the programme. In other words, they represent the target of what a trainee 'knows, understands and can apply' upon completion of the practical experience programme.

Much focus on professional skills

During the traineeship, much attention goes to general and communication skills, attitude and conduct, and professional ethics. Aside from learning outcomes that pertain to the specific subject-related competencies, the accountancy programme thus also involves the development and full command of generic learning outcomes.

Generic learning outcomes

The generic learning outcomes describe general capabilities and skills that are essential for the personality development of accountants and the ability to apply subject-related learning outcomes, including professional conduct. The accent of these learning outcomes lies on acquiring the right professional attitude and the development of communication skills. Appendix 2 lists these generic learning outcomes.

The generic learning outcomes are worked out within the context of the practical experience programme. Each context calls for its own approach. As such, the practical experience Assurance programme focuses specifically on the audit function of the accountant.

Subject-related learning outcomes

You will find the subject-related learning outcomes for the programme within the subject areas ICAIS (Internal Control & Accounting Information Systems), A&A (Audit & Assurance), FA (Financial Auditing) and CEP (Conduct, Ethics and Accountancy).

Work domains

A work domain consists of a set of processes, ranging from engagement acceptance to the reporting to the client, and represents a combination of related activities.

Within the practical experience Assurance programme there are two work domains:

1. Audits of annual accounts;
2. Other assurance engagements.

Within these work domains, the learning outcomes are grouped according to the various phases in the work processes (from engagement acceptance to the reporting and closing meeting). The learning outcomes thus relate to the different phases of assurance engagements and other assurance-related engagements.

Some learning outcomes have a more general character and can thus come up in different phases within the various work domains. When one or more of these learning outcomes come up within a specific phase of a specific work domain, you need to identify this in your annual report. However, you are explicitly required to cover these learning outcomes in the work domain phase indicated in the table of Appendix 1.

Professional products

The learning outcomes for the practical experience programme have been translated into a number of 'professional products' that you produce during the programme.

**A professional product is the tangible end result of a work process or assignment that you have contributed to.
For each phase an indication is given of the professional products that you need to contribute to.
Your professional products are evidence that you meet specific CEA learning outcomes.**

Appendix 1 shows the relationship between the work domains, the various phases within a work domain, the professional products that you contribute to within a work domain phase (non-exhaustive), and the learning outcomes that are achieved thereby.

2 | The learning process

The purpose of the practical experience programme is to develop to the level of a starting professional. What this level entails is explained in detail in Chapter 3. The practical experience programme assumes a development from a starting level of minimal command of supporting subjects, core subjects and basic skills and an ending level that enables you to function as a starting professional.

Realising growth

The practical experience programme must therefore lead to growth and further development of professional knowledge, attitude and skills. That implies greater responsibility and independence, more planning and coordination, more delegation of work details, more complicated issues and tasks, negotiations with clients, et cetera.

Learning: formal and informal

Learning on the job has both formal and informal aspects. The formal side is the ultimate purpose of the educational programme: admission to the accountants' register. Independent assessors evaluate you in a formal sense with that purpose in mind. The learning process itself, however, is informal in the sense that you are personally responsible for the planning and your learning progress. Such learning involves much personal initiative. Your own role and responsibility are important. Obviously you are guided in this by your mentor.

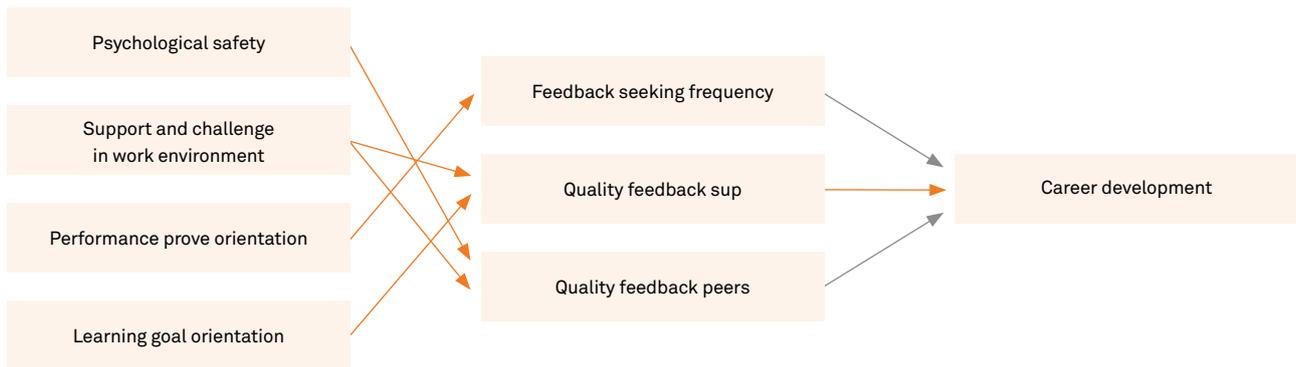
2.1 Self-directed learning

In self-directed learning the following aspects are of overriding importance:

- You learn by asking and receiving feedback;
- You learn by working together with others;
- You learn in an ongoing cycle of planning and reflection on your work and yourself.

Trainees who are able to ask the right feedback questions and to receive practical answers to these feedback questions accelerate their personal learning process.

The following table illustrates the feedback process:



Feedback

For the learning process it is essential that you regularly ask feedback on your work and that you receive feedback from your mentor that you can immediately put into practice. Other aspects that are important for the learning process are psychological safety and the extent to which there is a learning climate within the organisation. When repeated requests for feedback are interpreted as a lack of self-reliance, then this is bound to lead to fewer requests for feedback.

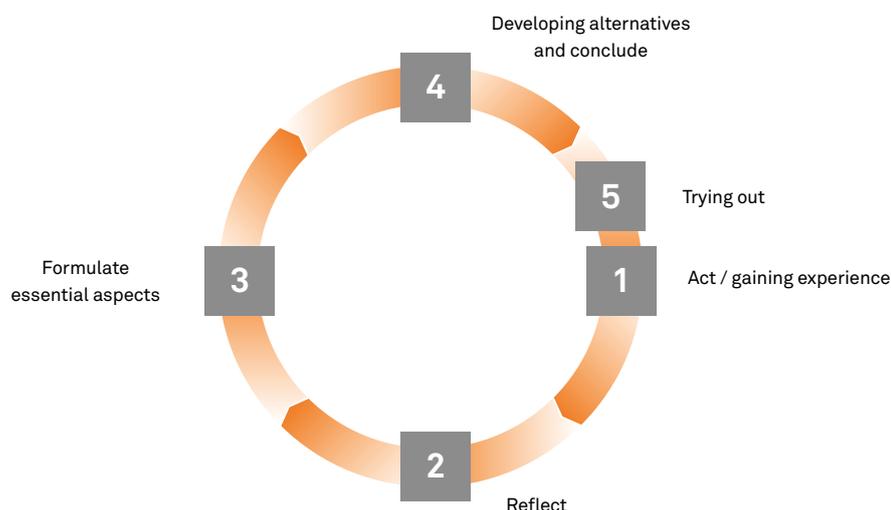
Your mentor will for example challenge you during meetings to demonstrate that you are able to ask feedback. The challenge for your mentor is to provide answers that you can immediately use in practice. Asking feedback must become part of your way of working and learning.

Systematic learning

The starting point in self-directed learning is that you are able to grow constantly as a professional accountant. A competent professional learns in a permanent cycle of planning and reflection. You evaluate and analyse your personal actions in order to learn from these. Your mentor is an important sounding board for you in this process. The reports that you prepare during the practical experience programme should be evidence of self-direction and in particular of the ability to reflect.

2.2 Korthagen's spiral model for reflection

The way you learn involves a cyclical process. This is reflected in the spiral model for reflection (Korthagen et al., 2002):



The key aspect in the spiral model is the interaction between action and learning from that action.

Phase 1: 'Gaining experience'

Phase 1 is about your own actions. The role of your mentor is mainly to help you select a suitable working environment where you can gain experience. Suitable means that the environment must match your level or skill. Such environment must be neither too difficult nor too easy.

Phase 2: 'Looking back'

In phase 2 you look back upon your experiences during phase 1. For example, you can reflect on your personal actions by comparing the actions in connection with a specific assignment with your actions during a comparable previous assignment. The role of your mentor during this phase is to help you specify this.

Questions to ask yourself in this reflection process are:

- What was the context that I was involved in?
- What did I want to achieve?
- What did I feel?
- What was I thinking?
- What did I do?
- What went well?
- Where can I improve and why?

Phase 3: 'Analysing and reaching conclusions'

Phase 3 involves signalling patterns and any discrepancies between the various aspects of your acting, thinking and feeling. Together with your mentor you formulate patterns in your actions and in the consequences of this for the situation. Is this the first and only time that a specific type of behaviour occurs? Or do you act this way more often? The role of your mentor is to coach you in identifying discrepancies (confrontation) and to help you search for any patterns in your actions and the consequences of these (generalisation). Through systematic reflection you can put your finger on any inconsistencies in how you interpret experiences and between that interpretation and the results of your actions.

This can for example involve discrepancies between:

- your ideal image and the real world;
- verbal and non-verbal expression;
- what you claim to have done and what you actually did;
- wanting and doing;
- how you see yourself and how your mentor sees you.

Phase 4: 'Formulating what you will do differently'

Phase 4 involves coming up with activities to resolve the discrepancies identified. When you only see one solution, then the risk is real that you will immediately see this as the most appropriate solution. But when exploring alternatives, it may turn out that the first option is not necessarily the best. The choices are your own, but your mentor will support and stimulate you to formulate realistic and concrete solutions and to oversee the consequences.

Phase 5: 'Trying things out'

In phase 5 you try to resolve the discrepancy through action (carrying out the activities decided on in phase 4). Phase 5, "Trying things out", coincides with phase 1, "Gaining experience". And so the circle is complete.

Summarising

It is important that you learn from your own actions in a cyclical way. Self-reflection is essential in this learning process. You reflect back on your own actions by comparing what you did in the context of an assignment with your previous actions related to a similar assignment. You identify what you have learned from the assignment, what went well and what can be done better next time. This involves making yourself vulnerable.

2.3 Portfolio

An important tool in self-directed learning is the portfolio. In the portfolio you establish links between the professional products, experiences, learning outcomes and your own profile. In addition, the portfolio is intended to monitor your progress in the practical experience programme and to record or adjust your plans for personal development. Also in the portfolio you state your views regarding your personal professional profile. This profile depends on your personal preferences, interests and/or possibilities, and it contributes to your personal career options. You build up your portfolio in your electronic learning environment (ELO). Chapter 8 clarifies what to include in it.

3 | The entry-level professional

The ultimate purpose of the practical experience programme is that you function at the level expected of a starting professional. In principle, an entry-level professional can fulfil the various roles of the accountant. As stated in the Regulation Governing the Professional Profiles, the roles of the accountant are those of ethical professional and assurance provider, gatekeeper, communicator, researcher, client coordinator, manager and collaborator. As to the role of assurance provider, this is limited here to the other assurance engagements.

The NBA has formulated thirteen core competencies for the entry-level accountant.

3.1 Core competencies of the accountant¹

At entry professional level, an accountant should be able to:

- a. personally direct and carry out assurance engagements, assurance-related engagements and other engagements such as advisory engagements;
- b. demonstrate awareness of the public role of the accountant, acting in accordance with the related fundamental principles contained in the Professional Code of Conduct for Accountants, and in that context attending first and foremost to the public interest;
- c. apply the necessary critical attitude during professional work that is intended to form an independent professional opinion;
- d. recognise the limitations of his or her own professional work and to involve the help of other experts or specialists where necessary;
- e. render account for his or her personal functioning as an accountant;
- f. signal changes in the profession and the field of accountancy, including the related social implications, on a timely basis, analyse these as to their relevance, discuss these with professional colleagues and lay persons, and apply them where necessary;
- g. conduct independent research in a methodologically sound manner in a subject area pertaining to accountancy;
- h. assess the value or usability and the limitations of research in the professional field;
- i. maintain good relationships with clients and anticipate adequately the needs and expectations of internal and external users of the professional services of accountants;
- j. think analytically, think strategically and reason logically;
- k. communicate clearly, understandably and convincingly, both in writing and orally;
- l. provide leadership in the professional practice, both as project manager and in other functions, to individuals and teams, including as coach or mentor of professionals or future practitioners;
- m. cooperate in a constructive and mutually binding way within a team or with other professionals, in various roles and circumstances.

¹ Article 4 of the Regulation Governing the Professional Profiles

A competency is interpreted here to mean the combination of knowledge/ expertise, skills and attitude/conduct.

3.2 Growth and development

As a trainee you go through a growth process during your practical traineeship. Ultimately you will function at the level of a starting professional accountant. Growth will be visible in different ways. During the Assurance Practical Experience Programme a distinction is made between the following four growth components:

1. Growth in level of responsibility: during the traineeship programme you will perform specific activities at a continuously higher level of responsibility and functional level;
2. Broadening of the scope of work: the scope of activities expands steadily;
3. Increase of the complexity of the assignments to be performed;
4. Growth in skills and awareness of the necessary professional attitude.

During the traineeship you need to show that you are achieving personal growth with regard to each of the above four components.

4 | Mandatory elements of the programme

During the traineeship programme you are by definition involved in a development process. That applies both for the subject-related and the generic learning outcomes. Heavy focus lies on the development of a proper professional attitude and of good general and communication skills. For that reason you start the practical programme with a **zero measurement**, and you train your skills by means of an extended **training programme** in order to be able to fulfil the role of accountant at entry level.

The development of a proper professional attitude and good communication skills involves two dimensions: the training of this attitude and these skills and the demonstration of these in professional situations.



In your **personal development plan** and your **annual plans** you identify the activities that you intend to carry out in order to grow to the entry level of an accountant. In the **mid-year and annual reports** you list the activities that you have actually carried out.

During the first and second years of the programme you participate in **two intervision meetings** per year. During these meetings you discuss with other trainees possible solutions for (anonymised) problems that you encounter during your traineeship.

In the third year of the programme you participate in a thesis group. On the basis of the assignment (again anonymised) that you have carried out, you discuss the dilemmas that you have encountered. You also place your dilemmas in a broader social context. You discuss this on the basis of propositions.

Supervision and assessment

During the three years of the programme, your mentor is the one who facilitates, coaches, supervises and assesses you. A reviewer carries out a second assessment. If the reviewer disagrees with the mentor, he or she informs the mentor accordingly, who then discusses this with you. The reviewer checks, on the basis of a substantive assessment, whether your mentor carries out his or her role properly. In that way the role of the reviewer is more that of process supervisor and monitor.

4.1 Starting with a zero measurement

To ensure an approach that matches your individual needs, you start your practical traineeship with a zero measurement. The zero measurement can be conducted in various ways, each of which takes your specific work environment into account: an oral assessment, a 360 degree feedback assessment, a self-assessment, or a combination of these. Your internship office decides the form and scope of this zero measurement.

Development points

Once this zero measurement has been carried out, it is decided what skills and professional attitude you already possess and what skills call for further development (from baseline to target position, also referred to as Ist and Soll positions). The generic learning outcomes serve as the starting point for this. During the training programme to be followed each year, these development points can be given extra attention. This can be done in different ways. For example, you may be asked to formulate learning goals per training day in response to the zero measurement, and parts of the training programme can be linked to the results of the zero measurement. Your specific development points and personal preferences are considered in all this. To a greater or lesser extent the outcome of the zero measurement thus enables an individual approach.

Relevant for achieving the entry level for a professional accountant is not so much the work experience that you have already gained, but more whether you are able to develop specific communication techniques and a good professional attitude in the performance of accountancy-related tasks.

4.2 Personal development plan (PDP)

Following the zero measurement, you start the practical experience programme by writing a personal development plan (PDP). In this personal development plan you demonstrate that you have oriented yourself on your specific work environment. Based on this orientation, you then prepare a global overall planning for the full practical experience programme, with a concrete plan for the first year. Your personal development plan for the first year should contain the following: the activities to be performed (including the clients where these are known), your personal development points and your learning goals.

Before you start writing the PDP, you need to go through an orientation process. Each year the PDP may be adjusted and/or expanded in the annual plans that you write at the start of the second and third years of the programme.

Orientation phase

During the orientation phase you meet with people within the organisation that serve as possible key figures in the context of your practical experience programme, including the mentor. Together with your mentor you address the following questions at the start of the programme:

- “Who decides my role within the teams?”
- “What type of assignments may I carry out, considering my experience?”
- “What clients (or type of clients) do we have?”
- “How do I come to a spread of assignments?”
- “Who does what within the organisation?”
- “On what basis do I get promoted to a position with greater responsibility?”
(or: “How does the promotion policy work?”)
- “In what way does my progress in the theoretical programme link up with the progress in my practical programme?”
- “How can I ensure that I can develop my skills and professional attitude within the organisation?”

For answers to the above questions you may rely on information of the internship office. Based on this information, you can inquire with actual (and potential) key figures in your organisation, including your mentor. Based on your answers, you complete the professional growth scenario.

Professional growth pertains to the development of knowledge, attitude, skills and ethics. For each of these aspects you formulate **learning goals** through which you meet the CEA learning outcomes at the end of the practical experience programme. These learning outcomes are formulated in SMART terms (specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic, time-related). This enables you to establish a relationship between knowledge development and your development with regard to attitude, skills and ethics.

A learning goal identifies what a trainee wants to achieve through the practical experience programme. It specifies in clear and concrete terms what the trainee seeks to internalise in terms of knowledge, insights and skills. The purpose of the learning goals is to achieve the learning outcomes by working on professional products.

PDP template

In the PDP you identify how you plan to give substance to the practical experience programme. You describe your planned development, including the way to achieve this. Appendix 3 is a template that you can use for writing the PDP.

Description of the Ist position

The PDP starts with a description of your starting position. In this you state what education (and courses) you have followed, your work experience, and what other knowledge and experience you have gained that is relevant in the context of the practical programme.

Description of the Soll position

Next you describe your target. Where do you want to be upon completion of the programme? To a considerable extent, this is determined by the contents of the programme. These are aimed at achieving the various learning outcomes, and partly by your own ambition. You may, for example, want to focus on specific areas in your work.

Description of process from Ist to Soll

Lastly, you explain, based on a planning schedule per year, how you want to develop from your starting to your targeted position. How will you realise your personal growth, and what impact does this have on the learning goals to be achieved? For each of the four growth components below, you describe as concretely as possible the following subjects for the first practical experience year:

- the activities to be performed (or clients) in relation to the envisioned growth track;
- the personal development points; and
- the learning goals for the coming year.

Four components of growth and development:

1. growth in responsibility: you can perform specified activities at a continuously higher responsibility and/or functional level;
2. broadening of the scope of work: the scope of activities within a specific domain expands;
3. increase of the complexity of assignments to be carried out;
4. growth in skills and awareness of a professional attitude.

Following this, you also describe the diversity of the various activities and your development of general and communication skills and professional attitude. In the PDP you also include a time schedule and the arrangements made regarding the supervision by the mentor.

You need to place the PDP in the electronic learning environment (in Dutch: elektronische leeromgeving, abbreviated as ELO) and have this approved by your reviewer within six weeks after the starting date. Your reviewer will assess the PDP within six weeks. If your reviewer does not approve the PDP, you will be notified accordingly by your mentor. All subsequent submission deadlines move forward by one month if the revised PDP, approved by your mentor, is not resubmitted within two weeks after the evaluation by your reviewer.

4.3 Annual plan

In the annual plan you include a concrete timetable for the coming practical experience year, if this has not already been done in the PDP. You write in any case an annual plan for the second and third years of the programme. You indicate which clients you will be involved with, what activities you will carry out at those clients, and at what level you will perform these activities. In addition, you prepare a planning schedule of the hours that you will spend on the various activities. For the various activities, you indicate what laws and regulations you plan to apply, insofar as foreseeable. You also address the planned progress in your theoretical programme by describing the relationship between the progress in your theoretical programme and the activities that you will carry out.

For the various work activities planned, you indicate the work domains within which these will take place. You describe which professional products you will contribute to within the various phases of these work domains. Per work domain phase, you then indicate whether you expect to achieve the related CEA learning outcomes.

In your annual plan you identify the concrete learning goals for the coming traineeship year, including the extent to which you will achieve the CEA learning outcomes.

Changes in your work situation versus what you have indicated in the PDP are also identified in your annual plan. For example, you may have been promoted or transferred to a different unit.

If you start to work for a different employer during your practical year, you need to submit a revised annual plan as soon as possible. Do not wait until you start to write the next annual plan.

For the preparation of an annual plan use the template that is included in Appendix 4.

The annual plan must be uploaded to the ELO so that your mentor can approve it within four weeks after the start of the new practical experience year. The annual plan will be evaluated by your reviewer within six weeks.

If the annual plan is not approved by the reviewer, you will be notified accordingly by your mentor. All subsequent submission deadlines move forward by one month if the revised PDP, approved by your mentor, is not resubmitted within two weeks after the evaluation by your reviewer.

4.4 Mid-year reporting

You meet with your mentor on a regular basis to discuss the progress of your practical experience programme. During these meetings you discuss the activities that you have carried out in the previous weeks, by means of which you demonstrate your professional development. Halfway during each practical year a report is prepared of these discussions: the mid-year report. This report, limited in size, gives an overall impression of progress made. Your internship office may, however, decide that you first need to write a preparatory memo and that the meeting is only conducted after that, by reference to this memo. In that case you prepare such a memo prior to the meeting and a mid-year report after the meeting.

Since the report reflects the contents of the meeting, the report must contain your personal contribution to the meeting and that of your mentor.

During the meeting and in your report you address at least the following points:

1. Progress in the practical experience programme in relation to the PDP and the most recent annual plan;
2. Development of general and communication skills (generic learning outcomes) on the basis of the training activities followed and the assignments and activities carried out;
3. Subject-related, organisational and planning issues encountered during the past six months and the solutions decided on;
4. The role of the mentor in terms of supervision. This involves the four roles of the mentor: coach, process monitor, subject matter guide and reviewer;
5. Your improvement points: what aspects will you attend to in particular during the coming six months?
6. Arrangements for the coming six months.

Explanation

Re 1: Progress of practical experience programme in relation to the PDP and the most recent annual plan

You discuss the planning schedule for your practical experience programme as reflected in the PDP and the most recent annual plan (if applicable). Are you still on track? Do you have enough assignments with sufficient complexity? Do you get around adequately to the work that you have described in your PDP and the most recent annual plan? How is your level development getting along?

Re 2: General professional skills (generic learning outcomes)

You discuss your development in relation to the generic learning outcomes. The criterion here is that your mentor is the one who sees how your professional skills in the practical setting are developing.

Re 3: Subject-related issues

Discuss subject-related issues (in particular in relation to laws and regulations). What issues have you encountered? How did you address these? What would your mentor have done in the situation?

Re 4: The role of the mentor in your supervision

Your mentor fulfils different roles, that of coach, subject-related supervisor, process monitor and reviewer. And he indicates how he views you from each of these four angles.

Re 5: Improvement points

Together with your mentor you identify points where improvement is still needed. What will you spend extra attention on in the coming six months (or longer)?

Re 6: Making arrangements

The arrangements that you make are formulated in SMART terms. This stands for:

Specific: you make concrete arrangements;

Measurable: you can measure the results;

Acceptable: you can make the arrangements within the organisation where you work;

Realistic: the arrangement is feasible;

Timely: within what period will you reach your goal?

The formulation of arrangements according to the SMART method follows a cyclical quality model. It is hardly conceivable that there would be no points for improvement that arrangements might be made for.

A point to consider

The mid-year reports can closely resemble the internal assessment reports. It is conceivable that integration would take place at this point, meaning less personal burden.

The following matters then need to be arranged:

1. Accessibility of the reports for the mentor and the reviewer;
2. Transferability in case you change employer or internship office;
3. Involvement of the mentor in the performance and assessment meetings;
4. Ensuring that the subjects discussed during the mid-year meetings are sufficiently addressed in the performance and assessment meetings.

Appendix 5 contains the template for the mid-year reporting.

You upload the mid-year report to the ELO and arrange approval by your mentor halfway during the practical experience year (so after six months). You need to do this within four weeks after the first half of the year. The mid-year report will be reviewed by your reviewer within six weeks after this. If the mid-year report is not approved by the reviewer, you will be notified accordingly by your mentor.

4.5 Annual reporting

The annual report is more detailed and extensive than the mid-year report. It goes into greater depth and involves accountability. In this report various activities are covered, with the subject of assurance always being addressed.

You demonstrate:

- a. to what extent you have achieved the learning outcomes;
- b. your development and growth into a starting professional.

On the basis of professional products that you have worked on, you report to what extent you have satisfied the learning goals (including the CEA learning outcomes) by phase within a specific work domain.

During each phase of a work process you submit one or more professional products. You list these professional products in your annual report, but they are not added to the report.

In the annual report you address, insofar as relevant, by work domain phase, the following subjects:

1. the learning goals;
2. the activities carried out;
3. the application of theoretical knowledge and of the regulatory framework;
4. the current relevance of statements by the Accountancy Division;
5. communication skills;
6. professional attitude;
7. the dilemmas;

8. the three streams: corporate governance, the public role of the accountant, and ICT (what programmes have you worked with, and what ICT aspects did you have to deal with at the client?);
9. self-reflection;
10. the supervision by the mentor and/or supervisor for the assignment.

Work domain phase:	Professional product 1	Learning goals
	Professional product 2	Application of theoretical knowledge and of laws and regulations (including statements by Accountancy Chamber)
	Professional product 3	
	Professional product 4	Communication skills
		Professional attitude
		Dilemmas
		IT
		Self-reflection

By carrying out (anonymised) assignments, you thus demonstrate that you are able to expand the scope and depth of your practical programme. You show that you are developing professionally. This development consists of four components (see also section 3.2):

1. responsibility level;
2. the scope of the work;
3. the complexity of the work;
4. growth in skills and awareness of professional attitude.

Dilemmas

In each annual report you also address one or more **dilemmas** according to the level of your practical traineeship.

A dilemma is a choice between two or more alternatives that are equally attractive (or unattractive), where the choice pertains to an issue or situation in your professional practice that you have had to deal with as part of an assignment that is relevant in the context of the practical experience programme.

The complexity of the dilemmas links up with the level at which you operate. In the first year of the programme the dilemmas are relatively simple. In the second and third years, however, the complexity of the dilemmas increases. A dilemma often relates to the Code of Conduct Regulation for Accountants (*Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants, VGBA*) or the Independence of Accountants in Assurance Assignments Regulation (*Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten, ViO*), but not necessarily.

Self-reflection

As also emphasised in Chapter 2, it is important that you demonstrate that you learn from your actions. For that reason, the annual reporting also involves self-reflection. The Korthagen model described in Chapter 2 should be used for this.

4.6 Streams

The accountancy programme includes three specific “streams”:

1. the public role of the accountant;
2. corporate governance;
3. ICT.

In the CEA learning outcomes report, streams refer to the key underlying subjects that can come up throughout the entire accountancy programme, both in the individual courses and in the work domains.

In your annual reports, ICAIS assignment and thesis you need to address these streams. In Appendix 1 these learning outcomes are included in the related work domains and clearly marked.

Re 1: Public role of the accountant

The accountant fulfils an important role within society. As accountant, you serve the public interest. The CEA has thus identified learning outcomes that see to the public role of the accountant. The learning outcomes that belong to this stream are identified in Appendix 1 with an (M).

In the description of the professional products that you have contributed to, you need to explicitly address the public role of the accountant. The learning outcomes for this stream are to be taken into consideration in this.

Re 2: Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance is likewise identified as a separate stream and must therefore be addressed in your annual reporting. CEA has formulated learning outcomes for Corporate Governance that are identified in Appendix 1 with (CG).

Re 3: ICT

Considerable attention is given in the practical programme to ICT. In your annual reporting you need to indicate how you have dealt with software applications and how these applications have impacted the results of your work. In the ICAIS assignment, explicit attention is given to ICT. CEA has thus also formulated ICT-related learning outcomes for the practical experience programme. In Appendix 1 these learning outcomes are identified with (ICT). In your reports you need to describe the impact of ICT on the audit (planning, execution, support, etc.). The learning outcomes in the field of ICT are to be covered from this perspective.

A template has been developed to enable you to structure the annual reporting. This template is included in Appendix 5.

Reporting on the learning outcomes achieved

In the annual reports you have to indicate the work domains within which you have carried out assignments. The work domains are divided into phases (engagement acceptance and retention, execution and completion). An indication is given of the professional products applying for each phase that you can work on during the practical experience programme (see Appendix 1). By working on these professional products you can achieve the CEA learning outcomes belonging to that phase. In the annual report it is therefore sufficient to state that, by contributing to the professional products pertaining to that phase (which you have described in the annual report), you have satisfied the related CEA learning outcomes. In the ELO you do need to indicate that you have fully satisfied certain learning outcomes at entry accountant level.

Submission of annual reports

An annual report relates in principle to the past traineeship year. Such a year covers twelve months. Provided that there are good reasons, the period that is covered in the annual report may be extended up to sixteen months. During the practical programme you have to submit at least three annual reports. If your development does not coincide with the submission deadlines for the annual reports, you may need to submit more annual reports (for example, four or five). There should definitely be no gaps between the various reports while work has been done during those periods that contributes to your development.

You need to upload the annual report to the ELO and to have it approved by your mentor within four weeks after the end of the traineeship year. The annual report will be assessed by your reviewer within six weeks. If the annual report is not approved by the reviewer, you will be informed accordingly by your mentor. All subsequent submission deadlines move forward by one month if the revised annual report, approved by your mentor, is not resubmitted within two weeks after the assessment by your reviewer.

4.7 Training events

As part of the training programme you attend a three-day training event each year. This event is specifically directed at the further development of general and communication skills (the generic learning outcomes). Based on the experience already gained within the professional context of a firm or other organisation that provides accountancy services, the combined events may be confined to a minimum of six days (building up to two or three traineeship years). This is decided by the internship office.

The specific content of the training programme can differ, depending on the professional context. It is also determined by the generic learning outcomes and by your personal interests and development points.

What is important in any case is that:

1. You are given a varied offer (fully or partly adapted to your situation) based on the outcome of the zero measurement.
2. The training event links up with the specific focus of your programme and is aimed in terms of content at the accountancy profession. This reflects, among other things, in the case studies selected.
3. The training event relates to the generic learning outcomes of the CEA.
4. The development of personal competencies is key to the approach taken in the training event.
5. The training event is aimed at enabling you to function at entry accountant level at the end of the practical experience programme.

The NBA website lists the organisations where you can follow the training events.

4.8 Intervision

During the first and again in the second year of the practical experience programme you participate in at least two intervision meetings. You will thus have had a minimum of four such meetings by the time you start the third year of the programme. If you have already had six meetings before the start of the last year of the programme (due to having taken longer before starting the final year), then the requirement of further intervision meetings ceases. The intervision may be integrated in the training programme described in Section 4.7.

Professional development

Intervision can contribute in a positive way to your professional development. In an intervision group you can discuss personal (but anonymised) work issues and determine what you have done well or where improvement is needed. By learning to talk about personal (anonymised) work issues and thinking about possible solutions and mitigating measures, the intervision meetings help prepare for the thesis in the final traineeship year. In the thesis, you address your personal dilemmas in relation to an assignment.

You learn from each other how to deal with practical work issues. Learning from each other is thus an important goal of the intervision meetings. In addition, they contribute towards satisfying the learning outcomes.

Intervision group

Ideally, an intervision group consists of a maximum of eight persons. The group consists of peers, and the intention is that each member discusses an anonymised work issue. The intervision meetings are led by a supervisor or coach who is an expert in the field. This supervisor or coach first holds one or more introductory meetings with the group, explaining what is expected from the participants in the intervision group.

Moderator

The group appoints a moderator, who ensures that the meeting is run effectively. This moderator cannot simultaneously be involved in the discussion of work issues. If the moderator discusses own problems, then one of the other participants takes over the role of moderator temporarily. The expert supervisor/coach stays in the background but monitors the procedures and arrangements made and can intervene if necessary.

The moderator has the following tasks:

- keeping track of the time;
- ensuring that everyone contributes equally to the discussions;
- leading and, where necessary, summarising the discussions.

The moderator must ensure that the atmosphere is not aggressive or defensive and that everyone is respectful towards each other. The expert supervisor/coach supports the intervision group and the moderator and can intervene if the situation gives reason thereto.

Arrangements

To ensure that an intervision group functions well, certain arrangements must be made. In preparation for intervision, the following arrangements apply:

1. There is a strict attendance requirement. The expert supervisor/coach thus maintains an attendance list.
2. Each participant is treated by the group with equal regard and in a collegial way.
3. The intervision group is based on security and trust. What is discussed remains within the group.
4. The expert supervisor/coach indicates prior to an intervision meeting how long it will take, who prepares what and when, and what needs to be done in terms of homework.
5. The expert supervisor/coach prepares a meeting schedule in advance, for example once or twice per year or once per quarter.
6. Arrangements are made regarding the final date and the final evaluation.
7. The venue for the meeting is quiet and has a pleasant atmosphere, and participants cannot be interrupted.
8. You do the intervision for yourself. It stimulates your personal quality and professionalisation. So it calls for active participation.

Identifying the issues

You formulate a work issue in such a way that it cannot be associated with a specific case. In other words, the work issue that you discuss is not casebound but rises above specific client situations. Examples include the relationship with colleagues, the quality of feedback, the way clients are assigned, etc.

Identification of work issues can be done in various ways:

- formulating work issues at the start of the meeting, for example by inserting a brief period for reflection;
- formulating the work issue at home and, if appropriate, having it written down and presented;
- writing down the various work issues on a flipover and then having the group decide what problem(s) to address.

Enough time and attention must be given to listing the work issues. The intervision group should preferably discuss issues that have not been solved yet.

Educational requirements

If you have not been exempted from part of the training programme (so that you need to spend at least three days per year in the training programme), you may then integrate the intervision meetings in the training programme (up to one half-day session per year). You may therefore follow the intervision meetings separately or as part of the training programme. The results of the intervision meetings must be included in the self-assessment in the annual reports.

4.9 Thesis

In the second semester of the third year of the programme, you will write and present a thesis. You thereby show that you are able to deal with situations which do not directly address or conflict with the theoretical or regulatory framework. During the traineeship programme you develop yourself to the level of professional, who can fulfil various roles of the accountant, depending on the specialisation chosen. In the thesis these roles become visible to a greater or lesser extent, and you demonstrate that you possess the necessary communication skills.

You describe in writing the assignment that you have carried out and the dilemma(s) that you have encountered along the way. You indicate how you have dealt with the dilemmas. Next you place the dilemmas in a social context.

In the plenary section you defend in a presentation to your thesis group the choices that you have made regarding the dilemmas. Such a group usually consists of four to eight trainees. After defending your choices regarding the dilemmas, you hold a discussion with your colleagues in the group, based on propositions, regarding the public significance of the dilemmas that you have had to face. Maybe you believe that regulations need to be revised, or that the culture within accounting firms must change, or that the educational programme for accountants must address new subjects.

In a number of meetings (usually five to eight, including the defence) you follow a programme that culminates in the defence of your presentation. You participate in the presentation during the final year of the practical experience programme, functioning at entry accountant level. To support you in your presentation, the NBA has prepared a Thesis Guide. This guide can be found on the NBA website.

Educational institutions and internship offices that have been accredited by the NBA Internship Council enable you to participate in a thesis group. Before enrolling to take part in such a group, you should first contact your internship office to find out what rules your internship office applies for this.

5 | The work domains

This chapter describes the work domains within your activities that must be done. It also explains the ICAIS assignment.

5.1 Assurance assignments

Each annual report must address the subject of assurance.

An assurance assignment is defined as follows: providing, based on a legal requirement or on a voluntary basis, limited or reasonable certainty regarding financial information on behalf of stakeholders, by performing activities that result in appropriate reporting.

Assurance assignments are divided into audits of annual accounts and other assurance assignments. During the practical experience Assurance programme you will address both of these work domains.

5.2 Audits of annual accounts

The annual accounts are an annual presentation of the financial situation of a company or other organisation. They consist of a directors' report, a balance sheet, a profit and loss account or an income statement for the past year, the notes to these two statements, a cash flow statement, and other information, and in certain cases an auditor's report. If an auditor's report is not included, then the reason for this must be stated. The audit of the annual accounts is decisive for the level of assurance that can be given about the information contained in the annual accounts.

As a trainee, you grow towards entry accountant level. At the end of the practical experience programme you should be able to conduct an annual accounts audit at that level.

5.3 Other assurance assignments

Aside from audits of annual accounts, you also carry out other assurance assignments during the practical experience programme.

Other assurance assignments are defined as follows: the performance of assurance assignments other than the audit of annual accounts, as described in the Detailed Provisions for Auditing and Other Standards (NV COS).

Examples of other assurance assignments include: limited reviews of annual accounts, non-financial (e.g. tax control framework) reports and future-oriented information (forecasts, prospectuses), and special audit assignments such as subsidy, circulation, fire damage and loss-of-profit statements. Other examples include statements of insured interest, revenue statements, sickness absence reports, wage sum reports, demerger statements, merger statements and temporary employment statements.

At the end of your traineeship years you can demonstrate that you are able to conduct an assurance assignment in this category at entry accountant level.

5.4 ICAIS assignment

During the practical experience programme, the subject of ICT is addressed in depth. The programme thus includes an assignment pertaining to Internal Control Accounting Information Systems (ICAIS). This assignment is included in Appendix 7. An explanation of the assignment is given in Section 6.3.

6 | Structure of the programme

6.1 Introduction

As indicated in Section 2.1, the practical experience programme assumes a self-directed learning process. For a solid grip on this programme, this chapter provides an indication per traineeship year of what is expected of you.

During the traineeship programme you will spend a minimum of 3,000 hours on activities that contribute to your development. This means a minimum of 1,000 hours per year. Of the total of 3,000 hours, minimally 1,500 hours must be spent on assurance-related work. Of that, minimally 1,125 hours are to be spent on audits of annual accounts and minimally 150 hours on other assurance-related work. For the remaining 1,500 hours of the traineeship programme there are no specifics. The related activities may fall within or outside the two work domains (audits of annual accounts and other assurance assignments). The other 1,500 hours must, however, constitute work related to the accountancy profession.

In your PDP and in the annual plans you have described your learning goals. These pertain to achievement of the learning outcomes and to acquisition of the necessary skills and professional attitude. You demonstrate that you are able to apply your theoretical knowledge, including that of laws and regulations, in concrete situations that you would encounter in the accountancy profession, that you address current practice (including consideration of statements by the Accountancy Division), and that you identify learning points in the context of self-reflection. In addition, you demonstrate that you can deal with dilemmas.

To demonstrate these various points, you use the professional products that you describe in the context of your traineeship programme. The points that you need to address in connection with your annual reporting are covered in Section 4.5.

6.2 First year of the programme

In your PDP you have described how you envision your growth track. This description indicates how you grow from your starting position (Ist) to the ultimate target level (Soll) at the end of the programme, as an entry level accountant. To achieve this, you need to realise personal growth in four different areas (the four components of growth, see Section 3.2).

For the first practical year, you have formulated in your PDP the learning goals that you want to achieve. In the annual report that relates to your first practical year you make clear, based on the professional products that you have contributed to, whether you have actually achieved these learning goals. By contributing to the development of professional products within the various phases of one or more annual accounts audits, you demonstrate not only that you have fully or partly achieved your learning goals, but also that you are able to deal with relatively simple dilemmas (you must work out at least one dilemma in your annual report), that you can apply laws and regulations in practical situations, that you can establish a relationship between current developments and your personal work, and that you are able to reflect on your work.

If you have worked on professional products that lie outside the two work domains but within the other activities (a maximum of 1,500 hours during the entire traineeship programme), then you need to describe these activities in your annual report, indicating how you have applied the relevant regulations, such as the Detailed Provisions for Auditing and Other Standards (NV COS) and the Code of Conduct for Accountants (VGBA) in connection with these activities. You also need to indicate at what level you have carried these out (at entry accountant level or otherwise).

6.3 Second year of the programme

In your annual plan for the second practical year, you have formulated learning goals that you want to achieve that either link up with your PDP or that deviate from it but with proper justification on your part. In the annual report pertaining to your second practical year you justify, on the basis of professional products that you have contributed to, whether you have actually achieved your learning goals.

In the second practical year you need to be involved in all phases of the audit of annual accounts. This does not yet need to be at entry accountant level, but you do need to have made sufficient progress so that you will be able to audit complex annual accounts at that level during the third practical year. By contributing to the development of professional products within the various phases of one or more audits of annual accounts, you demonstrate not only that you have fully or partly achieved your learning goals, but also that you are able to deal with relatively simple dilemmas (you must work out at least one dilemma in your annual report), that you can apply laws and regulations in practical situations, that you can establish a relationship between current developments and your personal work, and that you are able to reflect on your work.

In your annual reporting, you address the following phases:

- acceptance or retention of an engagement;
- the planning;
- the execution;
- the finalisation.

For each phase you establish the relationship between the professional products that you have contributed to and the CEA learning outcomes that you have worked on (see also Appendix 1).

In the annual report you also address the streams (see Section 4.6). Special attention is given during the practical experience Assurance programme to the subject of ICT. As such, you describe in your annual report the role of ICT in the professional products that you have contributed to.

During the second year you also work on an ICAIS assignment. This assignment focuses on the information and ICT processes within an organisation that are intended to ensure relevant and reliable information. You also establish a relationship between the role of ICT and the structure of the administrative organisation and internal control measures.

If you have worked on professional products that fall outside the two work domains but within the other activities (a maximum of 1,500 hours during the entire traineeship programme), then you need to describe these activities in your annual report, indicating how you have applied the relevant regulations, such as the Detailed Provisions for Auditing and Other Standards (NV COS) and the Code of Conduct Regulation for Accountants (VGBA) in connection with these activities. You also need to indicate at what level you have carried these out (at entry accountant level or otherwise).

At the end of the second year, your mentor and your reviewer prepare an estimation of the time that you will need to reach entry level in the accountancy profession. This estimation may be based on your progress during the theoretical programme and/or your progress during the practical programme. You need to consider this estimation when preparing the annual plan for your third practical year. At the end of the second practical year your mentor and reviewer may therefore conclude that you still need another two or more years of practical experience. If your mentor and reviewer decide at the end of the third practical year that earlier completion is nonetheless possible, then you complete the practical programme earlier as yet (assuming that you have met all conditions).

Interim adjustment

Should it be decided at the end of the second year of the programme that it will take more than a year for you to complete the practical programme, whereas your development during the third year turns out to be speedier, then you can still complete the practical programme at the end of the third year. The opposite is also possible: that the mentor and the reviewer indicate at the end of the second practical year that you can complete the practical programme at the end of the third year, but that it turns out at the end of the third year that you still do not satisfy all conditions. In that case the practical programme is extended as yet. The mentor will justify his decision in writing in the ELO.

6.4 Third year of the programme

During the third year of your practical programme you will be involved, at entry accountant level, in the audits of two different types of organisations. Five different types of organisations apply in this regard: commercial companies, production companies, service companies, financial institutions and government organisations.

In your annual report you need to describe a relatively complicated financial accounts audit that you have carried out during your third practical year. For each phase of the audit assignment carried out, you describe which professional products you have contributed to and whether you have thereby realised the related CEA learning outcomes.

In your annual reporting, you address the following phases:

- acceptance or retention of an engagement;
- the planning;
- the execution;
- the finalisation.

During the practical programme you need to conduct audits of the annual accounts of different types of organisations, in that way developing the insight that different types of audit approaches call for. For minimally two types of organisations you will have audited the annual accounts at entry accountant level. In your annual report for the third year, you therefore make a comparison between these two audits with respect to the most significant financial statement items as to key activities (review of independence, risk analysis, post-balance sheet audit, audit memo, etc.).

Based on the professional products to which you have contributed during the two annual accounts audits, you demonstrate that you have achieved your learning goals, that you are able to deal with complex dilemmas (you must work out at least one such dilemma), that you can apply laws and regulations in your audit work, that you can establish a relationship between current developments and your personal work, and that you are able to reflect on your work.

During the third year of the practical programme you also participate in an intervision group. By means of a thesis, you demonstrate that you can handle one or more complex dilemmas and that you are able to place these dilemmas in a social context.

As part of the practical programme, you also work on other assurance assignments. At the end of the third year, you describe in your annual report one other assurance assignment that you have carried out during the year at entry accountant level. You discuss the professional products that you have contributed to in the various phases of this other assurance assignment.

In your annual report for the third traineeship year you also discuss the three streams (see Section 4.6), with special attention to the subject of ICT. This is an in-depth section of your third-year report. You show that you understand the ICT processes of the organisation that you have audited and what the ICT process means for your audit approach. You express an opinion about the risks, reliability and continuity of the computer environment of the organisation. You demonstrate that you understand the general IT controls within the organisation that you have audited. If an IT auditor has been engaged in connection with the audit of the annual accounts, you then make clear that you are able to understand, describe, analyse and interpret the conclusions of the IT audit.

For the annual accounts audit that you have carried out, you describe and analyse, in line with the relevant professional regulations, the influence of information technology on the organisation, including the related processes, systems and governance (ERP, cloud computing, big data, networking, privacy, social media, reporting software), and you determine the consequences of all this for the work that you need to carry out, including the necessary methods and techniques (such as audit software).

If you have worked on professional products that fall outside the two work domains but within the other activities (a maximum of 1,500 hours during the entire practical programme), then you need to describe these activities and to identify how you have applied the relevant regulations, such as the Detailed Provisions for Auditing and Other Standards (NV COS) and the Code of Conduct Regulation for Accountants (VGBA) in connection with these activities. You also need to indicate at what level you have carried these out (at entry accountant level or otherwise).

7 | The integrated final examination

7.1 Introduction

The accountancy study programme for all three specialisations (Assurance, SME and Finance) ends with an oral examination. During this examination, both theory and practice are covered, thus facilitating the integration of theory and practice that is also reflected in the learning outcomes that have been identified.

Purpose of the examination

The purpose of the integrated final examination is for you to demonstrate that you are able to reflect on your practical experience activities from a theoretical context and to apply theory to situations that you would encounter in professional practice.

7.2 Core competencies

The results of the integrated final examination essentially determine whether you function at entry accountant level. To decide whether you indeed function at that level, it is necessary to determine whether you possess the necessary competencies. The review of competencies emphasises the integrated character of the examination because this review involves an evaluation of whether you apply the combination of knowledge, attitude, skills and professional attitude correctly.

For the entry level accountant, a total of thirteen core competencies have been formulated (see Chapter 3). The final examination focuses mainly on the learning outcomes that pertain to the following five core competencies:

- the ability to direct and conduct assurance engagements, engagements related to assurance and other engagements;
- awareness of the public role of the accountant, acting in accordance with the fundamental principles as described in the Code of Conduct for Accountants (VGBA), and in the context of promoting the public interest;
- applying in the professional practice the necessary critical attitude in order to form an independent and professional opinion;
- rendering account for one's own functioning as accountant;
- communicating clearly and understandably and in a convincing manner.

You are expected to demonstrate during this examination that you have mastered the learning outcomes applying to professional knowledge and skills at the required level and that you possess the right attitude and conduct (learning outcomes related to ethics and soft skills).

7.3 The examination

The practical experience programme ends with an oral examination of one and a half hours at the most. It is administered by two examiners, one of whom is involved in the theoretical programme, while the other works as a professional accountant. In the choice of examiners, your specific major is considered.

The examination covers a broad range of subjects, and all aspects of the accountancy profession may be covered.

Current developments are likewise covered in the examination. For the rest, the subjects are spread across:

- the relevant subject areas;
- theory, practice and current developments;
- the entire portfolio of the candidate;
- scope and depth;
- the various work domains;
- the various phases of the work domains

7.4 Admittance to the examination

The integrated final examination represents the close of the educational process and is also the examination for admittance to the accountants' register. It is not administered until you have:

1. met all requirements for the practical experience programme; and
2. completed the theoretical programme.

To allow proper preparation for the oral examination, the examiners are given access to your portfolio. The exact contents of your portfolio are set out in Chapter 8.

7.5 Grading

Following the examination, of which a written record is maintained, the two examiners decide the final score.

8 | Contents of the portfolio for the programme

During the practical experience programme you build up a file. This file, your portfolio, contains:

- the traineeship agreement;
- the application for the practical experience programme, including schooling records;
- a personal development plan (PDP);
- mid-year reports (3);
- annual reports (3);
N.B. The professional products themselves are not included in your file.
- annual plans (2);
- the written thesis and the evaluation of the thesis (oral and written parts);
- evidence of participation in the training programme;
- theoretical programme records (certificates and testimonials received after the application);
- the evaluations by the mentor;
- the evaluations by the reviewer;
- if the acceleration rule is used: written justification for the acceleration request, the references, the application form and the review of the acceleration request;
- the correspondence of decisions regarding the practical experience programme (rejections and approvals, decisions in complaints procedures, etc.);
- confirmation of authenticity.

You build up the portfolio in the ELO.

ELO, the electronic learning environment

Working on personal growth assumes that you are able to learn from experience. You are therefore asked to reflect on your personal work and to report on this. These reports must be uploaded to your ELO. If you are admitted to the practical programme, you will be given access to the ELO by means of a password and log-in code. The first time that you log in, you will be asked to change your password. The password and log-in code are strictly personal. So make sure that no one else gets hold of your access codes to the ELO.

Progress table

In the progress table you keep track of the number of hours that you have spent on each work domain and of the learning outcomes that you have thereby achieved. The progress table should be updated immediately each time when you submit an annual report.

Part-time involvement

Your traineeship programme must involve a minimum of 20 hours per week, and your various work activities must be relevant in the context of the programme. If you spend less than 1,000 hours on the programme due to part-time employment, then all deadlines (including reporting deadlines) move up correspondingly. However, you first need to get approval for this from your Internship office.

Interruption and resumption

If circumstances prevent you from performing traineeship work, then you need to interrupt the programme. This cannot be done with retroactive effect. This way it is clear that the interruption prevents your involvement in the programme. It is therefore not possible to report about an interruption period. As soon as you are able to spend time again on traineeship work, you then resume the programme. Interruption and resumption of the programme must be coordinated with the Internship office.

9 | Rules and regulations

Rules and regulations

Your practical experience programme complies with various laws, regulations and detailed provisions, including:

1. European Directive on Statutory Audits of Annual Accounts and Consolidated Accounts (Directive 2006/43/EC)
2. Audit Firms (Supervision) Act (*Wet toezicht accountantsorganisaties, Wta*)
3. Accountancy Profession Act (*Wet op het accountantsberoep, Wab*)
4. Practical Experience Programme Regulation (*Verordening op de Praktijkopleidingen*). This contains practical information about the programme.
5. Practical Experience Programme (Financial Contributions) Regulation (*Verordening op de geldelijke bijdragen praktijkopleidingen*). This identifies the amounts payable to the NBA for the practical experience programme.
6. Detailed Provisions for the Practical Experience Programmes (*Nadere Voorschriften op de praktijkopleidingen, NV*). This contains practical information about the programme.

Applicable to your programme

In this information guide you will find an explanation of the rules set out in the Practical Experience Programme Regulation and the Detailed Provisions for the Practical Experience Programmes. The full text of the relevant laws and regulations can be found on the NBA website. In addition, the regulations of the internship office where you follow the programme always apply to your situation.

Confidentiality of data

Make sure that you anonymise any client data when describing assignments. A secrecy protocol has been prepared that contains the rules that apply regarding anonymisation of customer data that you use during your practical work. In all of your reports and during the intervision, the thesis, training events and the examination, you need to ensure that information that you share with others cannot be traced to specific clients or persons in your organisation.

Further requirements

Under the relevant regulations, the NBA Internship Council may introduce further requirements for the practical experience programme. The Council may, for example, require additional courses or establish further criteria regarding the work to be performed. The NBA Internship Council will announce this via newsletters (ensure that your mail data in 'MijnNBA' are correct!), Facebook and the NBA website.

10 | NBA Internship Council

Council

The responsibility for the practical experience programmes lies with the NBA. Practically all authority pertaining to the implementation and execution of the programmes has been mandated by the NBA board to the Internship Council. The Council develops the applicable regulations into policy rules. These policy rules can be found in the information guide. When new policy rules are developed, you will be informed of this by newsletter and via Facebook.

Supervision of internship offices

You follow the practical experience programme via an Internship office. The Council maintains supervision over the internship offices. By means of periodic evaluations the Council ensures the quality of the practical experience programmes at all internship offices. The examinations fall under the direct responsibility of the Council. The Council therefore also monitors the examinations.

11 | CEA monitoring function

In accordance with the Accountancy Profession Act, the CEA establishes the learning outcomes of the practical experience programmes. Next it reviews whether these programmes correspond with the learning outcomes. The CEA sets requirements in the field of quality care, the completeness of the work performed, the quantitative norms, the quality of reporting and the quality of the examinations. For its monitoring of the practical experience programmes, the CEA also applies the monitoring function that is exercised by the NBA Internship Council.

12 | Internship offices

The Internship office is responsible for the supervision and quality control of the practical experience programme. The tasks of the Internship office include the following:

- ensuring that consultation takes place between you and your mentor in the preparation, revision and evaluation of PDP, annual plans and mid-year and annual reports;
- screening of admissions to the practical experience programme;
- appointment of mentors and reviewers;
- evaluation of your work environment;
- ensuring that you take part in a training programme, the intervision and the thesis;
- preparing traineeship programme and mentorship agreements;
- monitoring progress;
- monitoring the completion of the practical experience programme;
- quality control;
- reporting to the NBA Internship Council;
- arranging an external traineeship location if needed;
- handling complaints.

For further information about internship offices see the Detailed Provisions for Practical Experience Programmes and the NBA website.

13 | The mentor

When starting the practical experience programme, you are in fact the director of your own educational process. Your mentor provides support where necessary. He (or she) has sufficient time and expertise for this and is intrinsically motivated to guide and coach you.

The Internship office appoints the mentor after determining that person involved satisfies the competency profile.

Tasks of the mentor

Your mentor fulfils four different roles. These are that of:

1. coach;
2. process monitor;
3. subject matter guide;
4. reviewer.

Coach

The mentor plays an important role in your coaching and development and therefore has sufficient time and expertise to supervise you properly. The mentor serves as a sounding board for the reports that you need to write, gives his views on the subjects to be covered and discusses your progress on a regular basis. For successful coaching it is important that you get proper feedback and that you ask the right questions.

Process monitor

The mentor also functions as process monitor. Your mentor confronts you when you do not have a report ready in time and – in case of a bottleneck – examines how he can help resolve this. The mentor sees to it that your development is such that you will ultimately satisfy the learning outcomes. The mentor furthermore assesses whether you will minimally achieve the entry level for the accountancy profession during the course of the third practical year.

Subject matter guide

Your mentor is also your subject matter guide. If a mentor believes himself to be insufficiently equipped for a specific part of the traineeship programme, he will rely on the findings and expertise of others. This may, for example, occur when the mentor has not been your direct supervisor for a specific assignment. In that case you need to identify in your report how the supervision has taken place. The person who supervises you in an assignment must know the requirements that apply for the programme and must be familiar with the competency profile for mentors.

It is also possible that the mentor believes that he is sufficiently capable but that you have your doubts about this. In that case you need to discuss this with your mentor and/or your contact person at the Internship office. If necessary, you can suggest a different mentor.

Reviewer

Since the mentor also assesses your reports, he also acts as reviewer, in part on the basis of a file review. The mentor gives a substantiated assessment of the work that you have carried out and of your development considering the phase of the programme, in terms of both quality and quantity. On a regular basis you evaluate with your mentor the arrangements that have been set out in the planning document and the traineeship agreement. If your mentor has approved one of your reports whereas the reviewer believes that the report requires revision, then the reviewer informs the mentor of this. Your mentor then discusses with you in what way your report needs to be adjusted.

External mentor

If you work for a firm or other organisation that does not have anyone who can act as mentor, then an external mentor can be a solution. This is someone who assumes the full supervision but who works elsewhere. In consultation with the Internship office, you personally arrange a suitable external mentor.

Discussing progress

On a regular basis, for example once per month, you discuss with your external mentor how you are progressing. Following each of your reports, the external mentor reports to the Internship office, using the forms intended for that purpose. Any costs associated with this are payable by your employer or by you personally. Obviously, clear arrangements need to be made regarding this up front.

Mentorship agreement

Your employer, your Internship office and your mentor together sign a mentorship agreement, in which the mentor confirms his willingness to coach you in your work and to contribute to your review, in line with the terms set out in the Detailed Provisions. The employer confirms the willingness to help ensure that the traineeship programme is conducted properly, to enable your mentor to properly supervise the trainees where possible in their work, and to contribute to the assessment of the trainees. In principle, the agreement is signed for the period during which the person is involved as a mentor for the Internship office and the employer. A blank version of the agreement can be found on the NBA website www.nba.nl.

14 | The reviewer

In addition to the mentor, there is also a reviewer that you operate with. When you start with the practical experience programme, the internship office appoints a reviewer for the full three traineeship years. The reviewer must match the competency profile for reviewers. The reviewer evaluates the periodic reports and discusses his findings with your mentor, who will take action if necessary.

Three roles

1. **Monitoring of the mentorship process.** Based on the documentation between you and your mentor, uploaded to the ELO, the reviewer evaluates the quality of the mentorship that you have received. If the reviewer determines that this mentorship is inadequate, then the appropriate procedure will be followed for this. This may differ per Internship office.
2. **Assessment of your competency development.** The reviewer sees to it that you acquire the right competencies that you need to be able to function as an entry level accountant.
3. **Review of your practical experience products.** This means that the reviewer gives an objective and reasoned evaluation in the ELO of your traineeship products in relation to the relevant learning goals and the learning outcomes of the traineeship.

What does the reviewer evaluate?

- the personal development plan (PDP);
- the annual plans;
- the reports (mid-year, annual).

Professional distance

The reviewer keeps enough distance during your traineeship so as to be able to evaluate objectively. All relevant communication and evaluations are uploaded to the ELO.

Desired profile

The reviewer has the experience and current expertise in the field that you are involved in. Ideally, the reviewer is regularly involved in the evaluation of trainees, so as to have a good benchmark. What is needed is a helicopter view of the educational process, so that the reviewer knows what to expect of you and when. A certain seniority plus a critical and professional attitude are needed to be able to assess your progress from a distance, also when this is not directly evident from your reports.

15 | The traineeship location

At the start of the practical experience programme the internship office establishes whether you can carry out the prescribed assignments within your work setting. If you cannot satisfy the work experience requirements within your own work environment, then you can choose to start temporarily in a different work environment where you can perform sufficient work activities that are also varied enough. Such an external traineeship location, as it is called, you need to arrange yourself in consultation with the employer. Your employer's willingness to enable this is a prerequisite.

The external traineeship location can be within an organisation that satisfies all requirements for a good traineeship location. This might be:

- The firm that audits the organisation that you work for. The external auditor can in such case also function as mentor.
- An accounting or auditing firm that is prepared to hire you temporarily. Such external traineeship location falls under the supervision of the internship office that you are registered. The costs associated with the external traineeship location are payable by you personally or your employer.

In case of change of employer, you and your new employer will need to sign a new traineeship agreement.

File transfer when changing traineeship location

If applicable, the old internship office transfers the traineeship programme file to the new internship office. If necessary, confidential data are removed from the reports, and the latter are fully anonymised. If the transfer of such file is problematic, then you can submit a request to the NBA Internship Council, which decides how the problem is to be resolved.

Traineeship abroad

All or part of the traineeship may also be followed abroad. If you opt for this, you first need to submit a written request for permission to the relevant internship office. You obviously need to be able to satisfy abroad the conditions applying for the traineeship, as set out in this information guide and the Detailed Provisions for Practical Experience Programmes. The traineeship must be examined in accordance with Dutch regulations, and it must be monitored under the supervision of an internship office and a mentor appointed by this internship office. The mentor must meet the requirements as described in this information guide.

16 | The traineeship agreement

The traineeship agreement is a standardised NBA agreement, in which the employer confirms his willingness to help ensure a successful traineeship. The employer confirms that, where possible, he will enable you to meet the relevant requirements regarding work environment, growth, duration, quality, content, scope and depth, as set out in the Practical Experience Programme Regulations and the Detailed Provisions for Practical Experience Programmes.

If you are unable to satisfy the traineeship requirements in your function, then the agreement establishes that the employer will cooperate in finding an appropriate solution within or outside the immediate work environment. This may be an external traineeship location.

Both you and your employer have the right to dissolve the agreement for the following reasons:

1. termination of employment;
2. discontinuation of your traineeship by the internship office due to lack of sufficient progress;
3. discontinuation of your traineeship due to lack of sufficient progress as evidenced by the internal assessment system;
4. frequent absence after one or more written warnings by the employer;
5. mutual consent by you and your employer.

The employer will notify the internship office of any early termination.

17 | Acceleration rule

Have you gained relevant work experience in the field of accountancy during minimally four of the five years, or minimally eight of the ten years, immediately preceding the start of the traineeship programme? Then you may be entitled to an accelerated programme.

The acceleration rule involves the following:

1. Minimally four years of relevant work experience during the five years immediately preceding the traineeship programme can lead to shortening of the programme by a maximum of one year.
2. Minimally eight years of relevant work experience during the ten years immediately preceding the traineeship programme can lead to shortening of the programme by a maximum of two years.
3. The last year of the traineeship programme must be followed regardless.

The work experience that you claim in connection with acceleration of your traineeship programme must have been gained in one or more positions of minimally 32 hours per week.

Applying for one year of acceleration

If you wish to shorten the programme by one year, then you need to go through several steps. You state on a form how much relevant work experience you have. This must provide evidence that you have gained relevant work experience during minimally four of the five years immediately preceding the practical experience Assurance programme. This application must be supported by testimonials by the ultimately responsible accountants for whom you have worked minimally four of the five years immediately preceding the start of the traineeship programme, plus a written report. In this report you describe your activities during these years (type of clients, size of clients, type of work, the conceptual framework that the assignments were based on, the level at which the work was carried out, the functional levels at which you performed the work, the complexity of the assignments).

The acceleration request is evaluated by two reviewers appointed by the internship office.

If acceleration by one year is granted, then the remaining traineeship programme is as follows:

- you start the programme with a zero measurement and by writing a personal development plan (PDP);
- you write minimally two mid-year reports;
- you write minimally two annual reports;
- you write minimally one annual plan;
- you hold minimally two intervision meetings;
- during the third year of the programme you participate in a thesis group;
- the training programme is still mandatory (but may be accelerated);
- the prescribed hours are reduced by one third;
- you close the programme with a final examination.

Applying for two years of acceleration

If you wish to shorten the programme by two years, then you need to go through several steps. You state on a form how much relevant work experience you have. This application must be supported by testimonials by the ultimately responsible accountants for whom you have worked minimally eight of the ten years immediately preceding the start of the traineeship programme, plus a written report. In this report you describe your activities during these years (type of clients, size of clients, type of work, the conceptual framework that the assignments were based on, the level at which the work was carried out, the functional levels at which you performed the work, the complexity of the assignments).

The acceleration request is evaluated by two reviewers appointed by the internship office. If the reviewers believe that it is not feasible, considering the experience that you have gained prior to the traineeship programme, to complete the programme in one year, they can then decide as yet to limit the acceleration to one year.

If acceleration by two years is granted, then the remaining traineeship programme is as follows:

- you start the programme with a zero measurement and by writing a personal development plan (PDP);
- you write minimally one mid-year report;
- you write minimally one annual report;
- during the third programme year you participate in a thesis group;
- the training programme is still mandatory (but may be accelerated);
- the prescribed hours are reduced by one third;
- you close the programme with a final examination.

No content-related exemptions are granted.

Appendix 1 |

Correlation between work domain phases, professional products and learning outcomes

The annual accounts audit

Phases of the audit of annual accounts	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
<p>Acceptance and continuance of engagements (assessment of independence and of other aspects)</p>	<p>Audit file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - client acceptance - evaluation of compliance with Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Prevention) Act - assessment of own independence - confirmation of engagement 	<p>A&A-2 (awareness of the expectations of the client and users of the audited accounts, identifying the areas of tension between the various stakeholders, balancing the interests of clients and the general public, reflecting on these, and involving these in the decision process) (M)</p> <p>A&A-5b (reflecting during the performance of professional and other tasks on ethical issues and dilemmas, and coming up with an independent substantiated decision, with due consideration of applicable professional rules and with a professional and critical attitude) (M)</p> <p>A&A-11.1 (applying the relevant professional rules pertaining to the process of client (re)acceptance for annual audit engagements)</p> <p>GEB-3 (reflecting on personal and situational causes of own professional conduct, and identifying strengths and pitfalls and areas calling for development)</p> <p>GEB-4b (carrying individual or joint responsibility for the direction of professional teams and collaborative processes, based on skills acquired and insights into a work situation)</p> <p>GEB-6b (analysing one's own process of forming professional opinions and making decisions, in order to learn from this)</p>

Phases of the audit of annual accounts	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
<p>Planning phase (acquiring knowledge of the entity and its environment + risk analysis + determining audit strategy)</p>	<p>Audit file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - risk analysis - evaluation of administrative organisation and internal controls - evaluation of IT environment 	<p>A&A-11.2 (for an annual accounts audit, gathering relevant knowledge of the entity and its environment, including its internal controls, in order to document and estimate the business, audit, inherent, internal control and detection risks, and to determine their materiality, in line with the applicable professional regulations)</p> <p>A&A-11.3 (for an annual accounts audit, documenting and analysing the impact of information technology on the entity and on its processes, systems and governance (including ERP, cloud computing, big data, networking, privacy, social media, reporting software), as well as determining the consequences for the work to be performed by the auditor, including the methods and techniques to be applied in the audit context (such as audit software), in line with the applicable professional rules) (ICT)</p> <p>A&A 11-4 (based on the risks identified, determining the work to be performed for an annual accounts audit, setting this out in an audit programme, and conducting the audit in order to obtain sufficient and relevant audit information)</p> <p>IC AIS-2b (establishing and evaluating a risk management and control system that is directed at the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations, at the reliability of reporting and at compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and identifying on the basis of these objectives the relevant internal control risks for the organisation (in particular internal control risks pertaining to financial information) (CG)</p> <p>IC AIS 4 (determining to what extent the management information and bookkeeping processes of an organisation result in reliable and relevant information to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management and control of the organisation, including appropriate archiving; - appropriate reporting; - compliance with relevant laws and regulations.) <p>IC AIS-9b (designing and documenting a comprehensive set of IT controls, in order to mitigate risks (including the risk of cybercrime) pertaining to the reliability of reporting, the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations, and compliance with relevant laws and regulations) (ICT)</p>

Phases of the audit of annual accounts	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
<p>Execution (system-directed + substantive audit work)</p>	<p>Audit file: - audit notes</p>	<p>A&A-6 (during the performance of professional and other tasks, to maintain a critical attitude, characterised by an inquisitive approach, alertness to circumstances that may indicate errors or fraud, and a critical evaluation of information obtained in connection with the audit)</p> <p>A&A-11.5b (making effective use, during the execution of an annual accounts audit, of available methods and techniques, including statistics, data analysis and/or process mining) (ICT)</p> <p>FA-4 (applying and evaluating the guiding principles for financial reporting, including the accounting principles for the valuation of balance sheet items and for determination of periodic results, as set out in Dutch law and the conceptual frameworks of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the IASB)</p> <p>FA-6 (assessing the reasonableness of the most important estimates applied in the financial reports)</p> <p>FA-7 (evaluating the notes to the annual accounts for accuracy and adequacy, taking into account applicable laws and regulations)</p> <p>FA-8.1 (evaluating to what extent the annual accounts of a public or private limited company have been prepared in accordance with the standards contained in Dutch law regarding annual accounts and the guidelines for annual reporting by large and medium-sized legal entities of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board)</p> <p>FA-14 (identifying the objectives and consequences of the annual accounts policy of company directors, such as earnings management and off-balance-sheet financing, and involving this in forming an opinion regarding the annual accounts) (M)</p> <p>FA-18 (evaluating the directors' report, including non-financial information, for accuracy and adequacy, with due consideration of laws and regulations and in the light of the information needs of stakeholders) (CG)</p> <p>ICAIS-5b (designing and evaluating a system of preventive and corrective internal control measures for different processes and types of organisations, with due consideration of the characteristics of the control environment such as culture, ethics, relevant</p>

Phases of the audit of annual accounts	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
		<p>laws and regulations, and governance structure) (CG)</p> <p>ICAIS-6 (identifying informal control mechanisms and evaluating their effectiveness for different processes and types of organisations, with due consideration of the characteristics of the control environment such as culture, ethics, relevant laws and regulations, and governance structure) (CG)</p> <p>ICAIS-11 (describing the possibilities of modern data analysis techniques for risk analysis and for evaluation of management information processes, bookkeeping processes and the system of internal controls, and applying these techniques effectively) (ICT)</p> <p>ICAIS-14 (recording in a clear and unambiguous fashion the underlying considerations in connection with the evaluation of the design, implementation and working of the internal controls system)</p> <p>Fisc-9 (regarding tax matters, signalling ethical and legal issues, balancing the interests of the various stakeholders and making professional decisions on the basis of this) (M)</p>
<p>Finalisation (finalisation of audit work + evaluation of findings + reporting + audit file completion)</p>	<p>Audit file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - group accountant - work by third parties - letter of representation - final checklist to monitor audit progress - audit statement - advisory or management letter - report for discussion with client 	<p>A&A-5b (reflecting during the performance of professional and other tasks on ethical issues and dilemmas, and arriving at an independent reasoned decision, with due consideration of applicable professional rules and with a professional and critical attitude) (M)</p> <p>A&A-7.2 (describing and applying the quality control procedures at engagement level, including documentation requirements)</p> <p>A&A-10 (formulating and applying the professional regulations regarding fraud and unusual transactions) (M)</p> <p>A&A-11.6 (for an annual accounts audit, carrying out the following specific activities, with due consideration of professional regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review of related party transactions; - review of post balance sheet events; - evaluation of the ability of the entity to operate as a going concern; - acting as group auditor or as auditor of part of the group; - use of the work of internal auditors and experts;

Phases of the audit of annual accounts	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review of the directors' report; - evaluation to what extent the annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable reporting principles and fairly present the balance sheet and profit and loss statement.
		<p>A&A-11.7 (for an annual accounts audit, reviewing the findings, on the basis of the work performed, in order to reach an opinion and reporting on this both orally and in writing to the client and the stakeholders) (M)</p>
		<p>A&A-11.8 (based on the audit work performed, translating relevant items that require attention into recommendations for the client's organisation and reporting these both orally and in writing to the client (including units charged with governance).</p>
		<p>FA-8.3 (reviewing to what extent the annual accounts of a listed company have been prepared in accordance with the applicable International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) of the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB))</p>
		<p>FA-13 (in special situations such as works in progress, lease contracts, pensions, option rewards, financial instruments, deferred taxes and acquisitions, weighing different alternatives regarding the accounting of relevant transactions and events and advising accordingly)</p>
		<p>ICAIS-15 (advising on possible improvements regarding weaknesses noted in the internal controls system)</p>
		<p>ICAIS-17 (from the perspective of corporate governance, documenting and evaluating the functioning of the systems of internal controls regarding financial information and the possible risks) (CG)</p>
		<p>ICAIS-19 (identifying, in the context of the control environment, the influence of corporate ethics on the functioning of the internal controls system with regard to financial information, and commenting critically on this) (CG)</p>

Other assurance engagements

Phases of other assurance engagements	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
<p>Acceptance and continuance of engagements (evaluation of independence + evaluation of other aspects)</p>	<p>Audit file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - client acceptance - evaluation of compliance with Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Prevention) Act - evaluation of own independence - confirmation of engagement 	<p>A&A-2 (awareness of the expectations of the client and users of the engagement, recognising the areas of tension between the various stakeholders, balancing the interests of clients and the general public, reflecting on these, and involving these in the decision process) (M)</p> <p>A&A-5b (reflecting during the performance of professional and other tasks on ethical issues and dilemmas, and coming up with an independent substantiated decision, with due consideration of applicable professional rules and with a professional and critical attitude (M)</p> <p>A&A-12.1 (for an assurance engagement other than an audit of annual accounts, applying the professional rules regarding the process of client or engagement (re)acceptance)</p> <p>GEB-3 (reflecting on personal and situational causes of own professional conduct, and identifying strengths, pitfalls and areas calling for development)</p> <p>GEB-4b (carrying individual or joint responsibility for the direction of professional team and collaborative processes, based on skills acquired and insights into a work situation)</p> <p>GEB-6b (analysing the personal process of forming professional opinions and making decisions, in order to learn from this)</p>
<p>Planning phase (acquiring knowledge of the entity and its environment + risk analysis + determining audit strategy)</p>	<p>Audit file (depending on type of engagement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - risk analysis - special circumstances - evaluation of administrative organisation and internal controls - evaluation of IT environment 	<p>A&A-12.2 (for an assurance engagement other than an audit of annual accounts, gathering relevant knowledge of the entity and its environment, including the characteristics of the object of the investigation, in order to document and assess the relevant risks of material errors, all in line with the applicable professional rules)</p> <p>ICIAS-2b (designing or evaluating an internal controls system, based on the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations, the reliability of reporting and compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and based on these objectives relevant to the organisation identifying internal control risks (in particular internal risks related to financial information)</p>

Phases of other assurance engagements	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
		<p>ICAIS-6 (identifying informal control mechanisms and evaluating their effectiveness for different processes and types of organisations, with due consideration of characteristics of the control environment such as culture, ethics, relevant laws and regulations, and governance structure)</p> <p>ICAIS-9b (designing and documenting a comprehensive set of IT controls, in order to mitigate risks (including related to cybercrime) pertaining to the reliability of reporting, the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations and compliance with relevant laws and regulations) (ICT)</p>
<p>Execution (system-directed + substantive audit work)</p>	<p>Audit notes</p>	<p>A&A-11.6 (for an annual accounts audit, performing the following specific activities, in accordance with professional regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review of related party transactions; - review of post balance sheet events - review of the ability of the entity to continue as a going concern; - acting as group auditor or as auditor of part of the group; - use of the work of internal auditors and experts; - review of the directors' report; - evaluation to what extent the annual accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable reporting rules and fairly present the balance sheet position and periodic results) <p>A&A-12.3 (for an assurance engagement other than an annual accounts audit, planning and executing the engagement in an effective and efficient manner and in accordance with applicable professional rules, using all available methods and techniques, including data analysis, process mining and/or statistical hypothesis testing and estimating methods)</p> <p>FA-4 (applying and evaluating the guiding principles for financial reporting, including the accounting principles for the valuation of balance sheet items and for determination of periodic results, as set out in Dutch law and the conceptual frameworks of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the IASB)</p> <p>FA-6 (assessing the reasonableness of the principal estimates applied in the financial reports)</p>

Phases of other assurance engagements	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
		<p>ICAIS 4 (determining to what extent the management information and accounting processes of an organisation result in reliable and relevant information to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management and control of the organisation, including proper archiving; - appropriate reporting; - compliance with relevant laws and regulations.) <p>ICAIS-5b (designing and evaluating a system of preventive and detective internal control measures for different processes and types of organisations, with due consideration of the characteristics of the control environment such as culture, ethics, relevant laws and regulations, and governance structure) (CG)</p> <p>ICAIS-6 (identifying informal control mechanisms and assessing their effectiveness for different processes and types of organisations, with due consideration of characteristics of the control environment such as culture, ethics, relevant laws and regulations, and governance structure)</p> <p>ICAIS-9b (designing and documenting a comprehensive set of IT controls, in order to mitigate risks (including related to cybercrime) pertaining to the reliability of reporting, the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations and compliance with relevant laws and regulations) (ICT)</p> <p>ICAIS-14 (recording in a clear and unambiguous fashion the underlying considerations in connection with the evaluation of the design, implementation and functioning of the internal controls system)</p>
<p>Finalisation (finalisation of audit work + evaluation of findings + reporting + completion of audit file)</p>	<p>Audit file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - letter of representation - final checklist to monitor audit progress - audit statement - review statement - advisory or management letter - report of discussion with client 	<p>A&A-12.4 (for an assurance engagement other than an annual accounts audit, in accordance with applicable professional rules, evaluating the findings to come to an opinion or conclusion and reporting this to the client)</p> <p>A&A-12.5 (on the basis of assurance work performed, translating relevant attention points into recommendations for the organisation of the client and reporting these orally and in writing to the client (including units charged with governance)</p>

Phases of other assurance engagements	Examples of professional products	CCEA learning outcomes*
		FA-13 (in special situations such as works in progress, lease contracts, pensions, option rewards, financial instruments, deferred taxes and acquisitions, considering different alternatives regarding the accounting of relevant transactions and events and advising on this)
		ICAIS-15 (based on weaknesses noted in the internal controls system, advising about possible improvements)

(*) Some learning outcomes are general in character and can be relevant in different phases of the various work domains. As and when one or more of these work domains apply within a specific phase of a work domain, you indicate this in your yearly report. However, you are required to cover these learning outcomes in the phase of the work domain that is indicated in the table of this Appendix 1.

Abbreviations of subject areas:

- FA: Financial Auditing
- ICAIS: Internal Control & Accounting Information Systems
- A&A: Audit & Assurance
- GEB: Conduct, Ethics and Decision-making (Gedrag, Ethiek en Besluitvorming)

Appendix 2 |

Generic learning outcomes

Limitations of expertise

1. The entry level accountant is able, when carrying out an assignment, to signal his own limitations, to engage experts where necessary and to formulate an instruction thereto (T+P).
2. The entry level accountant is able to assess the findings of experts engaged, to discuss these critically and to take them into account in forming an opinion (T+P).

Changes and developments in accountancy and auditing

3. The entry level accountant is able to signal relevant and current developments in accountancy and auditing and in the profession, to understand the consequences of these and to consider them in the exercise of the profession (T+P).
4. The entry level accountant is able to discuss accountancy subjects with colleagues in the profession (T+P).

Research skills

5. The entry level accountant is able to conduct practical research in a field that is relevant to accountancy, culminating in a report or paper at such level that it can be published, in detailed or summary form, as an article in a professional or academic journal (T).
6. The entry level accountant is able to identify relevant research, to evaluate the results of this critically and to apply it where useful in the performance of own engagements (T+P).

Analytic skills

7. The entry level accountant is able to generate new information and ideas, to quickly familiarise himself with these, and to analyse and apply these (T+P).
8. The entry level accountant is able to analyse information regarding complex professional situations, to recognise errors in argumentation and alleged evidence and to draw conclusions by applying logical reasoning (T+P).
9. The entry level accountant is able to signal and analyse problems (including identification of causal and other relationships) in order to arrive at effective solutions (T+P).

Conflict control and negotiation skills

10. The entry level accountant is able, in conflict situations and during negotiations, to weigh interests and viewpoints, thereby contributing to a result that is acceptable to the parties involved (T+P).

Organisational sensitivity

11. The entry level accountant is able to understand the influence and consequences of decisions and behaviour of people within an organisation and to take these into account in his actions (P).

Oral and written communication skills

12. The entry level accountant is able to listen actively and with empathy and to apply effective interviewing techniques (T+P).
13. The entry level accountant is able to communicate and present ideas, opinions and viewpoints with professional colleagues and lay persons, both orally and in writing and in a linguistically correct, compact, understandable and convincing manner (T+P).

Project management

14. The entry level accountant is able to plan, manage and keep control over engagements and projects that involve various persons (P).

Client management

15. The entry level accountant is able to respond correctly to the needs of both internal and external clients in order to develop and maintain a durable and meaningful relationship (P).

Coaching and leadership

16. The entry level accountant is able to motivate and stimulate colleagues in order to achieve professional and personal goals, through the development of knowledge, competencies and talents and through exemplary behaviour (P).

Setting priorities

17. The entry level accountant is able to set priorities and to plan his work carefully, taking deadlines into account (P).

Teamwork

18. The entry level accountant is able to work together with others in a pleasant way in order to achieve a common goal (T+P).

Diversity

19. The entry level accountant is able to get along with people with different talents and cultural backgrounds and to treat them respectfully (P).

Learning capacity

20. The entry level accountant is able to reflect on personal experience and that of others, to discuss this within a team and to learn from these (T+P).

21. The entry level accountant is expected to be able to develop himself permanently, in the context of lifelong learning (P).

Legend

T = the learning outcome applies to the theoretical programme

P = the learning outcome applies to the practical experience programme

T+P = the learning outcome applies to both the theoretical and the practical experience programme

Appendix 3 | Template for personal development plan

1. Description of Ist position

- Describe the educational programmes and courses that you have followed and the programme that you are still involved in (plus expected completion date). Refer to the certificates and diplomas that are included in the ELO.
- Describe your relevant work experience. Refer to a brief resumé that you attach as appendix.
- Describe your firm or other organisation briefly (type of clients, market segment, AFM permit or not, etc.), the office where you work, the department you work in, the type of engagements that you are usually involved in, relevant applications that you work with, and your function/rank within the organisation.

2. Description of Soll position

- The function or rank that you must reach in order to be able to achieve the learning outcomes at entry accountant level.
- Describe the areas of interest that you would want to give extra attention to during your traineeship. These may relate to a specific subject area (e.g. reporting issues, IT auditing or tax matters), branches of industry, function-specific interests (e.g. learning the full scope of the accountancy profession). In other words, also mention your personal ambitions.

3. Description of development from Ist to Soll position

- Describe how you have oriented yourself on the traineeship. Think back on the orientation phase prior to the programme. Who did you speak with, what insights did this lead to? Address the questions that can be answered on the basis of this orientation (see the policy document on reporting).
- Describe the outcome of the zero measurement. What was the outcome of this? Indicate how your discussion of the zero measurement with your mentor went. What does the outcome of the zero measurement mean for the contents of your traineeship and for the training programme to be followed?
- Describe the global planning of your traineeship, applying the four components of growth. Also link the outcome of the orientation phase and the zero measurement to your global planning. Include the training programme in this. If relevant, also describe in the global planning the link between the planning of your progression in the theoretical programme and the progress in the practical experience programme. In your global planning, also discuss other requirements: minimum number of hours, focus on ICT, the various types of organisations subject to audit.
- Formulate the learning goals for the first traineeship year. What learning goals have you formulated for the first year, and how will you work on these?

4. Planning the first traineeship year

- For the first traineeship year give a concrete planning of clients, activities, hours involved, regulations to be addressed, and learning goals for the coming year (in SMART terms). State when you will follow the training programme and the intervision.

5. Supervision by the mentor

- State whether your mentor also supervises other trainees.
- Identify what arrangements you have made with your mentor regarding the mentorship (frequency of meetings, your mutual work relationship, what are the impressions of your mentor based on, how does the mentor stay in touch with your managers on assignments, etc.).

Appendix 4 |

Template for annual plan

1. Any changes pertaining to your personal development plan, professional growth and progress in the theoretical programme. This may include:
 - the effects on the timetable of a:
 - new work situation (for example, you have received a new function);
 - quicker or slower progress in your development than foreseen (as apparent, for example, in the evaluation after the second traineeship year);
 - the results of the training programme and/or intervision and/or review. The annual reporting has led to new points to be attended to.
2. Specifics for the coming traineeship year, as a detailed elaboration of the PDP:
 - concrete clients, work to be performed, functional level and planned number of hours;
 - laws and regulations to be applied in the planned activities, where foreseeable;
 - possible revision of the time planning for the coming traineeship year.
3. Training sessions for the coming year:
 - identify subjects that will be addressed;
 - if applicable, the way trained skills and professional attitude will be applied in the work setting.
4. Learning goals for the coming traineeship year:
 - formulate SMART and identify clients/assignments where specific learning goals will be worked on;
 - involve the four components of growth in this;
 - link up with the PDP.

Appendix 5 |

Template for mid-year reporting

The following items are addressed in the mid-year reporting:

- progress in the practical experience programme in relation to the PDP;
- development of general and communication skills (generic learning outcomes) based on training events followed and assignments and other work performed;
- accountancy-related, organisational and planning issues encountered in the past six months and the solutions applied;
- the role of the mentor in your supervision (the report is to address the four roles of the traineeship supervisor, i.e. coach, process monitor, subject matter guide and reviewer).
- your improvement areas: what do you want to spend extra attention on in the coming six months?
- arrangements for the coming six months.

The mid-year report reflects the discussion that you have had with your mentor. Any differences of opinion and/or insight between you and your mentor must be highlighted.

Appendix 6 |

Template for annual report

1. Specific information:
 - Your full name, date of birth, address details, telephone number and e-mail address
 - Traineeship location
 - Name of mentor, address details, telephone number and e-mail address
 - Organisation that the mentor works for
 - The courses and educational programmes that you have completed in the past year, the number of years of work experience and the names of employer(s) involved, type of work experience (compilation, annual accounts audit, etc.), the relations between you and your mentor (What work relation do you have with your mentor? How do you and your mentor operate in the work setting? Do you and your mentor know each other also privately?)
 - Number of years of work experience of your mentor, type of work experience of mentor, number of years that you mentor has served in that capacity, and the number of trainees that the mentor has supervised, position of mentor versus you.
2. Your learning goals:
 - List all learning goals from the PDP and annual plan again and indicate:
 - what learning goals have been worked on;
 - what learning goals have been achieved;
 - have all learning goals from the PDP and annual plan been achieved? Why or why not?
3. List the requirements (number, type, work domains, hours, etc.). State what you have discussed about this with your mentor.
4. Work activities carried out:
 - What assignments that have been carried out in the context of the practical experience programme are explained here only briefly? Describe briefly what activities you have carried out (what professional products have you worked on), how many hours have you spent on these, at what level (at entry accountant level or otherwise), and what was your function/role in the team?
5. What assignments are described in detail in the context of the practical experience programme?
 - What professional products have you worked on, and within what phases of what work domains? Have the relevant CEA learning outcomes for each phase been achieved? And at what level were the activities carried out (at entry accountant level or otherwise). Also state your functional level and role in the team.
 - Describe per phase (insofar as applicable):
 - the work performed;
 - the theoretical knowledge applied (including laws and regulations);
 - the professional attitude (based on one or more dilemmas);
 - general and communication skills applied (reflecting on skills trained during the training programme); state what you have discussed about this with your mentor;

- In connection with the professional products in the various phases, have the related learning outcomes been achieved? Explain this (see also the learning goals, item 2 of this template).
- Per assignment:
 - the three streams (public role of the accountant, corporate governance, ICT). See the learning outcomes that belong to these streams (Appendix 2);
 - reflection: apply the Korthagen model and any points from the intervision meetings to the work performed. Reflection can lead to adjustment of learning goals. If the mid-year report is integrated in the annual report, then include the items for improvement discussed with the mentor;
 - provide an explanation of the four components of growth;
 - number of hours spent on the assignment.

6. Statements by Accountancy Division

- describe briefly a statement by the Accountancy Division and link this to work that you have carried out as trainee (where applicable and relevant).

7. Discuss the way the trainee was supervised during the past traineeship year.

- Reflect on the PDP regarding the supervision. Include the accountancy, organisational and planning issues that you have discussed with you mentor.
- Discuss how the supervision of the assignments that you have described has taken place if done by someone other than the mentor. How did the coordination between the supervisor for the assignment and your mentor go?
- Identify the arrangements that you have made with your mentor for the coming six months.

Appendix 7 |

ICAIS assignment

Criteria for the assignment

Develop for a client of your firm an interim audit plan, the results of which can be discussed with the client. The work involved must relate to an assurance engagement. The following subjects must be worked out:

Structure of the audit

1. Description of client:
 - A description of the strategy and objectives of the organisation, properly substantiated.
 - The internal control risks from the viewpoint of the client, strategic risks, compliance risks, reporting risks, risks regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of business processes.
 - Insight into the main business processes that are material to the annual accounts.
2. Criteria for the audit approach:
 - Description of the control environment of the client, with special attention to all relevant aspects identified in the COSO internal control framework (including ethics and integrity, culture, organisational structure, management style, HRM policy, etc.).
 - Indicate what risks play a critical role from the viewpoint of the auditor.
 - Carry out a risk analysis, taking into account the risk analyses already conducted and the depth and scope of these analyses (inherent and considering existing control measures).
 - Evaluate the quality of the risk analyses conducted by the organisation and the priorities decided on to mitigate relevant risks.
3. IT landscape:
 - Include an organigram of the information flows and relevant applications.
 - Give a description of the quality of the computerised processes:
 - Are the computer processes still legacy? If so, what consequences does this have for the information needs of the organisation and ultimately for the work of the auditor?
 - Is IT properly managed (whether outsourced or internal)?
 - Address the availability, integrity and confidentiality of the data and the consequences of this for the work of the auditor.
 - The general IT controls and the consequences of these for the work of the auditor.
 - If there is a cloud application, then address service level management, reporting, possible certification and ISAE assurance statements by third parties.
 - Describe the information security, where this is an important issue for management.
 - If there are major IT programmes or projects, then describe how these projects are controlled.
 - If an ERP application is used, then discuss how the package is structured. Determine whether there are extra risks due to manual activities, workarounds, or Excel reports, and whether authorisations are incorporated in the system.

4. Management information:
 - What are the information needs of the client?
 - What management information is relevant for the auditor with regard to the annual accounts? Determine how this information is generated.
 - From an IT perspective, address the quality of the underlying data, from what systems and/or applications these are created, and whether or not these can be used by the auditor.
 - Analyse the quality of the management information and determine how it can be improved.
5. Advice:
 - An understandable analysis of internal control risks, with recommendations for improvement of the internal controls. Consider explicitly the information needs of the client and the related IT aspects.
6. Conclusion
 - A substantive presentation that highlights the weaknesses signalled in internal controls. Consider what items you would incorporate in your management letter with a view to realising the necessary improvements.

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