



UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON

INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMMES

# Programme Regulations 2016–17

## Professional Accountancy Pathway 1

MSc  
Postgraduate Certificate

**Important document – please read**  
This document contains important  
information that governs your  
registration, assessment and  
programme of study



## Contents

Important information regarding the Programme Regulations .....	2
1 Structure of the programme .....	3
2 Registration .....	4
3 Recognition of prior learning and credit transfer .....	5
4 Assessment for the programme .....	5
5 Scheme of award .....	8
<b>Appendix A – Module outlines .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix B – Assessment Criteria.....</b>	<b>11</b>

## Important information regarding the Programme Regulations

### About this document

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As a student registered with the University of London you are governed by the current General Regulations and Programme Regulations associated with your programme of study. These Programme Regulations are designed and developed by the University of London.

In addition to Programme Regulations you will have to abide by the [General Regulations](#). These regulations apply to all students registered for a programme of study with the International Academy and provide the rules governing registration and assessment for the programme; they also indicate what you may expect on completion of your programme of study and how you may pursue a complaint, should that be necessary.

Programme Regulations should be read in conjunction with the General Regulations.

A [Glossary](#) provides an explanation of the terms used in this document.

If you have a query about any of the programme information provided please contact us. You should use the *ask a question* tab in the student portal <https://my.londoninternational.ac.uk>.

### To note

Throughout the Regulations, 'we' 'us' and 'our' mean the University of London; 'you' and 'your' mean the student, or where applicable, all students.

### Changes to Professional Accountancy Pathway 1 Regulations 2016-17

Addition of clause 4.3 under Assessment for the programme which clarifies what happens to the marks achieved for a coursework element if you defer the written examination.

# 1 Structure of the programme

## Awards

### 1.1

The following named awards are offered under Pathway 1 of the Professional Accountancy programme:

- Master of Science in Professional Accountancy (MSc)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Accountancy (PGCert).

### 1.2

The following named award may be granted as an exit award only under Pathway 1 of the Professional Accountancy programme:

- Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Accountancy (PGDip).

## Award structures

### 1.3

The MSc in Professional Accountancy under Pathway 1 consists of

- ACCA Professional level papers P1, P2 and P3, or their equivalent, recognised and accredited as prior learning, and

Three University of London modules:

- Strategic financial management [PAM004]
- Strategic performance management [PAM005]
- Strategic financial project [PAM006].

### 1.4

The Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Accountancy consists of two University of London modules:

- Strategic financial management [PAM004]
- Strategic performance management [PAM005].

### 1.5

The Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Accountancy is offered as an exit award only. It consists of

- two ACCA Professional level papers from P1, P2, P3, or their equivalent and
- two University of London modules (excluding the Strategic financial project).

## 2 Registration

### Effective date of registration

#### 2.1

Your effective date of registration will be

- 1 January if you first register before a December registration deadline,
- 1 April if you first register before a March registration deadline,
- 1 July if you first register before a June registration deadline, or
- 1 October if you first register before a September registration deadline.

### Date of first study session

#### 2.2

If your effective date of registration is 1 January, the study session for your first module(s) you select will start in the same month and will finish in June of the same year.

If your effective date of registration is 1 April, the study session for your first module(s) you select will start in the same month and will finish in October of the same year.

If your effective date of registration is 1 July, the study session for your first module(s) you select will start in the same month and will finish in December of the same year.

If your effective date of registration is 1 October, the study session for your first module(s) you select will start in the same month and will finish in March of the following year.

### Period of registration

The minimum and maximum periods of registration to complete the programme are given in the [Programme Specification](#).

#### 2.3

If you progress from the Postgraduate Certificate to the MSc your maximum period of registration will continue to be counted from your effective date of registration for the Postgraduate Certificate.

### Order in which to take the modules

Whilst you can register for modules in any order, you are strongly advised to have attempted the assessments for Strategic financial management [PAM004] and Strategic performance management [PAM005] before registering for Strategic financial project [PAM006].

#### 2.4

You may register for the modules in any order.

### Progression within the programme

#### 2.5

You may progress from the Postgraduate Certificate to the MSc if you have passed ACCA Professional level papers P1, P2 and P3, or their equivalent.

### 3 Recognition of prior learning and credit transfer

The rules for recognition of prior learning are described in the [General Regulations \(for students on the Global MBA and Professional Accountancy programmes\)](#)

#### 3.1

We will award 90 credits towards the award of the MSc in Professional Accountancy if you have passed ACCA Professional level papers P1, P2 and P3, or their equivalent.

#### 3.2

We will award 60 credits towards the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Accountancy if you have passed two ACCA Professional level papers from P1, P2 or P3, or their equivalent.

#### 3.3

We will not recognise or accredit as prior learning the ACCA Professional level papers P4, P5, P6 or P7 under Pathway 1.

### 4 Assessment for the programme

Each module is assessed by two *elements*. In turn, the elements may comprise one or more *items* of assessment. You will pass the element if the combined weighted mark for the items that make up the element is 50%.

See the virtual learning environment for the deadline dates for submitting coursework and projects.

#### Summary table of assessment

##### 4.1

Module	Strategic financial management [PAM004]		Strategic performance management [PAM005]		Strategic financial project [PAM006]	
Element of assessment	Coursework	Written examination	Coursework	Written examination	Coursework	Project
Element weighting	30	70	30	70	30	70
Item of assessment	2 items of coursework, each worth 15%.	1 three hour written examination item, worth 70%.	2 items of coursework, each worth 15%.	1 three hour written examination item, worth 70%.	a mark of at least 50% in the coursework.	1 project item, worth 70%.
To pass the element you must get:	a combined weighted mark of at least 50% for the 2 items of coursework	a mark of at least 50% in the examination	a combined weighted mark of at least 50% for the 2 items of coursework	a mark of at least 50% in the examination	a mark of at least 50% in the coursework	a mark of at least 50% in the project.
To pass the module you must get:	a mark of at least 50% in both elements*		a mark of at least 50% in both elements*		a mark of at least 50% in both elements	

\* The mark may be achieved through the application of the rules for compensating marginal failure.

## Taking assessments

Refer to the rules on assessment and assessment offences in the [General Regulations \(for students on the Global MBA and Professional Accountancy programmes\)](#)

### 4.2

When you register for a module you must take the assessments at the first available opportunity.

## Deferring an assessment

The deadline(s) and process for deferring a written examination are given in the virtual learning environment. If you defer taking a written examination you have to pay a module continuation fee when you register for the session in which you wish to take the examination. You do not have to register for the next available session; there are up to four sessions each year and you have five years to complete your studies.

### 4.3

If you defer the written examination, the mark for the coursework element of the module will be carried forward. If your mark for the coursework element is below 50%, the rules for compensating marginal failure will not apply and you must retake all item(s) of the element.

### 4.4

You can defer taking the written examination element of a module if you notify us by the deadline. You may only defer once per module.

### 4.5

If you do not notify us of your deferral and do not attend the written examination you will be given a mark of zero for the assessment element and it will count as an attempt at the written examination.

### 4.6

We will not allow you to defer taking a coursework element or project element of assessment. If you miss a deadline for submission of coursework or a project you will be given a mark of zero for the assessment item and it will count as an attempt.

## Deadlines for items of assessment

See the virtual learning environment for full details of all the assessment points and deadline dates.

### 4.7

Coursework items and project items must be submitted through the virtual learning environment by the deadline dates given on the virtual learning environment.

## Option modules: Passing assessments

Strategic financial management (PAM004) and Strategic performance management (PAM005) are option modules.

If you fail an element of assessment for option modules with a mark between 45%-49% refer to regulation 4.9 relating to compensation for marginal failure.

#### 4.8

For option modules, to pass a module you must get a mark of at least 50% in each element of assessment, subject to the application of rules for compensating marginal failure.

#### 4.9

For option modules, if an element is assessed by more than one item you will pass the element if the combined weighted mark for the items is at least 50%.

### Compensation for marginal failure of an element

#### 4.10

We will allow compensation for marginal failure for an assessment element within option modules if both

- the mark awarded for the assessment element is no more than 5% below the pass mark i.e. 45%-49% and
- the mark for the other assessment element is sufficient to produce an overall combined weighted pass mark for the module.

### Compulsory modules: Passing assessments

Strategic financial project (PAM006) is a compulsory module.

#### 4.11

For compulsory modules the pass mark for all assessment elements and modules is 50%.

#### 4.12

For compulsory modules we will not allow compensation for marginal failure for an assessment element within the module.

### Number of attempts permitted at an element of assessment

#### 4.13

The maximum number of attempts permitted for an element of coursework, written examination or project is two. Where the element is made up of more than one item, each item may be attempted a maximum of two times.

### Retaking an element of assessment

If you retake one or more elements of assessment for a module you will have to pay a module continuation fee when you register for the module to retake the assessment. You do not have to take the assessment at the next available session; there are up to four sessions each year and you have five years to complete your studies.

#### 4.14

You may retake any element of assessment that you have failed provided that you have not exceeded the maximum number of attempts.

#### 4.15

You will fail the element if the mark for the element is below 50% (subject to the application of the rules for marginal failure, where permitted). Where the element is made up of more than one item, all items must be retaken.

**4.16**

If you retake an assessment your most recent mark will be used for classification.

**4.17**

You may not retake an element of assessment that you have passed.

## **5 Scheme of award**

### **Mark scheme**

**5.1**

The following mark scheme is used for the Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and MSc:

<b>Mark range</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
70% and over	Distinction
60% – 69%	Merit
50% – 59%	Pass
0% – 49%	Fail

**5.2**

To calculate the final grade for the award, the marks for the University of London modules are weighted equally.

**5.3**

To be granted the award with Merit your mean average mark for the University of London modules that you have completed must be between 60% and 69%.

**5.4**

To be granted the award with Distinction your mean average mark for the University of London modules that you have completed must be 70% or above.

### **Weighting of the assessments**

**5.5**

The overall mark for each of Strategic financial management [PAM004] and Strategic performance management [PAM005] is calculated by weighting the marks achieved for the two items of coursework and the examination item in a ratio of 15:15:70.

**5.6**

The overall mark for Strategic financial project [PAM006] is calculated by weighting the marks achieved for the coursework item and the project item in a ratio of 30:70.

### **Date of award**

**5.7**

The date of award will correspond to the year that the requirements for the award were satisfied.

## Award requirements

### 5.8

To be awarded the MSc in Professional Accountancy under Pathway 1 you must

- satisfy us that you have passed ACCA Professional level papers P1, P2 and P3, or their equivalent, and
- achieve a mark of at least 50% in each of the three University of London modules. The mark may be achieved through the application of the rule for compensating marginal failure, where appropriate.

### 5.9

To be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Accountancy you must

- achieve a mark of at least 50% in each of the two University of London modules. The mark may be achieved through the application of the rule for compensating marginal failure.

### 5.10

The Board of Examiners may decide to grant the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Accountancy as an exit award if you:

- satisfy the University of London that you have passed a minimum of two of the ACCA Professional level papers P1, P2, P3 and
- achieve a mark of at least 50% in two University of London modules (excluding the Strategic financial project). The mark may be achieved through the application of the rule for compensating marginal failure.

## Appendix A – Module outlines

See the module specifications for more information about the module content:  
[www.londoninternational.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/ucl/professional-accountancy-msc-pg-cert#structure](http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/ucl/professional-accountancy-msc-pg-cert#structure)

### **Strategic financial management [PAM004]**

This module blends core principles of financial management with business strategy. The module looks at four main areas:

- 1 Corporate Finance
- 2 Mergers and IPOs
- 3 Investment Management and
- 4 International Capital Markets.

It covers major strategic financial issues of importance to company financial officers (FDs and CFOs) and other financially oriented corporate senior managers, including managers and analysts involved or interacting with finance-related activities and decisions.

### **Strategic performance management [PAM005]**

This module provides an understanding of key issues and applied methodologies relating to strategic management accounting, including performance management, information management and evaluating financial risk. It provides the essentials a manager should have when faced with making hard-edged financial decisions in the context of a complex and ever-changing business environment.

The framework for strategic management accounting is analysed in the context of providing managers with the information they need to plan for and control performance. The emphasis is on gaining insights into the blend of financial analysis and managerial judgment required to enable managers to make appropriate strategic financial decisions.

### **Strategic financial project [PAM006]**

This module is a two-part module where first of all students will have an opportunity to develop knowledge of research methodologies, and secondly apply these skills to the collection and analysis of data within a simulated accounting/finance related scenario. This will involve identifying and analysing data and information in relation to business challenges, researching alternative solutions, and applying a judgement based assessment of the evidence.

Students must complete two items of coursework. The first item is worth 30% of the marks and will demonstrate their knowledge and research skills. The second item is a project which is worth 70% of the marks. The format of this will depend on the question that is set each time. For example, students may be asked to submit a report directed to a management board or a governing body as part of the project brief amongst other related tasks.

## Appendix B – Assessment Criteria

### Coursework and Project Assessment Criteria

This is an indicative description of expectations at each grade level. Overall grades will comprise qualitative and quantitative elements. The setting of questions, tasks and requirements and the accompanying marking scheme should take account of the criteria below.

% range	Grade Descriptor	Description
85 +	<b>Outstanding Distinction</b>	<p>Work of outstanding quality, showing mastery of the subject matter with a highly developed and mature ability to analyse, synthesise and apply knowledge and theory. All objectives of the task are covered and work is free of errors. There is evidence of critical reflection and the work demonstrates originality of thought. Ideas are expressed with fluency and elegance.</p> <p>This work meets and exceeds the standard for distinction, as described in the 70-84 band, across all sub-categories of criteria: knowledge and understanding of subject; intellectual skills; capacity to solve more unusual or demanding scenarios involving application of deep understanding of the subject and its methods/techniques; research skills; use of research-informed literature and other scholarly practices.</p>
70-84	<b>Distinction</b>	<p>Produces work of exceptional standard, reflecting excellent understanding. Displays mastery of the subject matter, with notable critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights at forefront of the field.</p> <p>Shows excellent ability to select and apply appropriate and relevant methodologies/techniques/theories as well as the ability to evaluate methodologies critically. Deals with complex issues systematically and creatively, making excellent judgements. Conducts research highly effectively, using technical and/or professional skills as appropriate. Shows originality in application of knowledge and the ability to communicate at a very high level arguments, evidence and conclusions to diverse audiences.</p>
60-69	<b>Merit</b>	<p>Clear understanding of the subject area producing work with a well-defined focus.</p> <p>Shows some originality of ideas; appropriate use of analytical techniques; appreciation of methodology; critical analysis of data; evidence of independent reading; adequate referencing and professional bibliography; adequate structure and style; reasonably professional standard of presentation with some errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar. Shows understanding and critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice. Able to communicate very effectively arguments, evidence and conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences.</p>

50-59	Pass	<p>Demonstrates a sound general knowledge and understanding of material and subject area;</p> <p>Shows limited originality of ideas; straight forward application of analytical techniques; limited commentary on methodology; limited critical analysis of data; limited evidence of independent reading; adequate referencing and adequate bibliography; adequate structure and style; moderately professional standard of presentation with errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar. Able to communicate effectively with a given audience.</p> <p>Work shows a grasp of relevant concepts and material, but with some errors, gaps or areas of confusion. Only the basic requirements of the work are covered. There is a heavy reliance on course materials and little evidence of additional reading.</p>
40-49	Fail	<p>Demonstrates limited understanding and lacks the core knowledge of the subject area; lacking originality of ideas; limited application of analytical techniques; lacking commentary on methodology; limited critical analysis of data, little evidence of independent reading; adequate referencing and adequate bibliography; adequate structure and style; poor to moderate standard of presentation with errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.</p> <p>Offers some appropriate analysis, but with some significant inconsistencies which affect the soundness of argument and/or conclusions. Demonstrates very limited critical ability producing work that is too descriptive.</p>
0-39	Fail	<p>Demonstrates significant weakness in the knowledge base and understanding of the subject area; simply reproducing knowledge without evidence of understanding. Shows few original ideas; limited application of analytical techniques; limited understanding of methodology; lacks commentary on methodology; no critical analysis of data; poor, inconsistent analysis; very little or no evidence of independent reading; very poor referencing and poor bibliography; poor structure and style; poor standard of presentation with significant errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.</p>

## Written Examination Assessment Criteria

Combination of qualitative and quantitative questions with overall marks reflective of category grade levels below. The setting of exam questions and the accompanying marking scheme should take account of the criteria below.

As a generic point, if students do not follow the rubric, they will not receive benefit of the doubt. If in any one section more questions are attempted than required, the first questions attempted in order will be marked.

<b>% range</b>	<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>80 +</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Deep understanding; near-comprehensive knowledge; high levels of ability in analysis; coherent structure and direct focus on question; answer complete for the time available; ability to demonstrate intensive critical, independent reading beyond reading lists through highly relevant and original illustrations/examples/case referencing; fluent style; no or very minor errors of spelling; punctuation or grammar.
<b>70-79</b>	<b>Distinction</b>	Very good understanding; near-comprehensive knowledge; good level of ability in analysis; coherent structure; focus on question; answer reasonably complete for the time available; critical, independent reading; adequate referencing; fluent style; few, minor errors of spelling, punctuation or grammar.
<b>60-69</b>	<b>Merit</b>	Clear understanding; wide-ranging knowledge; effective analysis; correct use of methods and techniques; coherent structure; focus on question; answer adequate for the time available; evidence of directed reading; may have some referencing; adequate style; few errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<b>50-59</b>	<b>Pass</b>	General understanding and knowledge; some errors in analysis and use of methods/techniques; adequate structure; may not focus on question; answer nearly adequate for the time available; little evidence of reading; little or no referencing; simple style.
<b>40-49</b>	<b>Fail</b>	Limited general understanding and knowledge; numerous errors in analysis and incorrect use of methods/techniques; sketchy structure; poor focus on question; answer deficient for the time available; no evidence of reading; no referencing; simple style.

## Programme Regulations 2016–17 Professional Accountancy Pathway 1 (MSc/PGCert)

<b>20-39</b>	<b>Poor Fail</b>	Inadequate understanding and knowledge; numerous errors in analysis or no analysis; poor structure; poor focus on question or has mis-interpreted question; answer deficient for the time available; no evidence of reading; no referencing; poor style; significant errors in methods and techniques.
<b>0-19</b>	<b>Clear Fail</b>	Little or no understanding or knowledge; evidence of confusion in analysis; chaotic or fragmentary structure; lack of focus on question; no evidence of reading; no referencing; inadequate style; little or no use of methods/techniques in the correct manner or correctly.

**Project assessment criteria**

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Project Aims / Research Questions identified</b>	<b>Understanding of background and context / Literature Review</b>	<b>Data handling and generation / Research Design and Methodology Execution</b>	<b>Interpretation of results / Findings and Data Analysis</b>	<b>Discussion and conclusions</b>	<b>Presentation / Readability</b>
<b>Outstanding Distinction (80 +)</b>	This work meets and often exceeds the standard for distinction, as described in the 70-85 band, across all sub-categories of criteria: knowledge and understanding of subject; intellectual skills; research skills; use of research-informed literature and other scholarly practices. This work is of publishable quality.	Clearly expressed, well understood and at the forefront of the science	Clear and incisive critical analysis of background and context, clear appreciation of current issues and debate	Complete, rigorous approach, full understanding of limitations and uncertainties	Highly innovative interpretations, fully substantiated and critically appraised, appreciation of the subtleties of the data	Complete awareness of wider significance and application of results. Immediately publishable work	Clear and eloquently written, hardly any errors, all diagrams clear and appropriate. Thorough reference list
<b>Distinction (70–79)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conducts research highly effectively, using technical and/or professional skills as appropriate.</li> <li>-Displays exceptional grasp of a range of techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship.</li> <li>- Shows originality in application of knowledge, and excellent grasp of how knowledge is created and interpreted in the discipline.</li> </ul>	Clearly expressed, well understood and challenging	Clear critical analysis of the background and appreciation of current issues and debate	Rigorous approach, good understanding of limitations and uncertainties	Original insights derived from observations, good level of critical appraisal	Advanced awareness of wider significance and application of results. Publishable work	Clear and well written, well organised, few errors, clear and appropriate diagrams. Well referenced

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Able to communicate at a very high level arguments, evidence and conclusions to diverse audiences.</li> <li>-Is able to evaluate critically, with notable insight, a range of literature relating to current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline</li> <li>-Makes consistently excellent use of appropriate academic conventions and academic honesty.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Merit</b> <b>(60–69)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrates understanding of and skills in selected techniques/ approaches applicable to own research or advanced scholarship.</li> <li>- Shows some originality in the application of knowledge, and some understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.</li> <li>- Able to communicate effectively with a given audience.</li> <li>- Can evaluate critically examples of literature relating</li> </ul>	Clearly expressed and well understood	Good understanding and critical analysis	Good realistic approach, aware of most limitations and uncertainties	Realistic understanding of observations, justified by data available	Some good understanding of wider implications. Potentially publishable with some additional work	Good level of presentation, few errors, most diagrams clear and appropriate. Well referenced

## Programme Regulations 2016–17 Professional Accountancy Pathway 1 (MSc/PGCert)

	<p>to current research and advanced scholarship in the field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Makes consistently sound use of appropriate academic conventions and academic honesty.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Pass</b> <b>50–59</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrates some skill in selected techniques and/or approaches applicable to own research or advanced scholarship, but with significant areas of weakness.</li> <li>- Lacks sufficient understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge.</li> <li>- Can evidence and discuss/apply examples of literature relating to current research but lacks critical engagement.</li> <li>- References to appropriate literature/ evidence and use of academic conventions are insufficient and/or inconsistent.</li> </ul>	<p>Clear, but of limited scope or not fully understood</p>	<p>Satisfactory understanding, but at face value and with limited critical analysis</p>	<p>Satisfactory, but limited appreciation of uncertainties and limitations</p>	<p>Sound but basic understanding of observations, largely justified by available data</p>	<p>Basic understanding of wider implications, but could be developed further</p>	<p>Satisfactory presentation, some errors but most diagrams clear and appropriate. Reasonable references</p>

## Programme Regulations 2016–17 Professional Accountancy Pathway 1 (MSc/PGCert)

<p><b>Fail</b> <b>30–49</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little or no skill demonstrated in selected techniques applicable to own research or advanced scholarship.</li> <li>- Lacks any understanding of</li> </ul>	None, or very confused	None, or very limited	Sloppy and inaccurate	Failure to draw many significant observations from the data	No attempt to consider the wider significance of the results or their implications	Very difficult to read, poor or unclear diagrams, lacking properly cited references. Disorganised
<p><b>Fail</b> <b>0–29</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge.</li> <li>- Fails to evidence or discuss/apply appropriate examples of literature relating to current research and advanced scholarship in the field.</li> <li>- References to literature/ evidence and use of academic conventions are flawed/irrelevant.</li> </ul>	Lacking in clarity	Incomplete and some misconceptions	Lacking in rigor, little regard for uncertainties and limitations	Limited understanding of observations with misconceptions and/or not fully justified	Limited understanding or mis-conception of wider implications	Numerous errors, unclear or inappropriate diagrams, limited references. Poorly organised