

Capstone in Applied Accounting Sciences (CAS4801)

Learning Unit 0

<p>Purpose of the module</p>	<p>The purpose of the module is to develop students with enabling competencies to solve complex problems facing accountants in accounting and related services fields. Working individually and in teams, students will integrate technical competencies from Financial Accounting, Auditing, Tax, Management Accounting and Finance with non-technical competencies from business, decision-making, relational and digital acumen to become responsible leaders who behave ethically and create sustainable value for a wide range of stakeholders within an organisation.</p>
<p>Look and feel of the online module</p> <p>(Consider what you want your module site to convey and how it should look.)</p>	 <p>Capstone in Applied Accounting Sciences-CAS4801</p>
<p>Learning assumed to be in place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good business communication skills (CBC1501) • Able to analyse and respond to a variety of text (CBC1501) • Able to learn independently in an Open and Distance Learning context with minimal support (Unisa First Year Experience/Orientation) • Have detailed knowledge, specific skills and applied competencies in Financial Accounting, Management Accounting, Auditing and Taxation (Degree in Financial Accounting). • Be able to communicate what they have learnt comprehensibly in the medium of instruction (CBC1501) • Be able to take responsibility for their progress (CAS3701) • Have an understanding of ethics and ethical theories and be competent in ethical decision-making (CAS1501, CAS3701) • Be able to perform basic automation and data analysis using excel based tools (AIN2601, AIN3701)

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1.1. Welcome page

Welcome to the Capstone in Applied Accounting Sciences - CAS4801!

Congratulations on making it this far in your studies; we are proud of all the hard work you have put in to get here.

The Capstone in Applied Accounting Sciences module will allow you to apply all the skills and knowledge you have learned throughout your qualification. It is designed to prepare you to solve problems facing professional accountants in different roles. We know this module will be challenging, but we are confident you have the skills, knowledge and drive to succeed!

The purpose of the module is to develop students with enabling competencies to solve complex problems facing accountants in accounting and related services fields. Working individually and in teams, students will integrate technical competencies from Financial Accounting, Auditing, Tax, Management Accounting and Finance with non-technical competencies from business, decision-making, relational and digital acumen to become responsible leaders who behave ethically and create sustainable value for a wide range of stakeholders within an organisation.

Your lecturers and e-tutors are here to support you every step of the year; please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need help.

We are excited to see what you will accomplish in this module!

Kindly ensure that you are well versed in navigating the module site. To begin this module, please visit the **Welcome and Orientation** page. The module information and orientation will provide you with important information.

Regards,

CAS4801 Lecturer

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1.2. About CAS4801

CAS4801 is a 24-credit year module designed to prepare you to solve complex problems facing accountants in accounting and related services fields. Working individually and in teams, you will integrate technical competencies (skills and knowledge) from Financial Accounting, Auditing, Tax, Management Accounting and Costing with non-technical competencies to make ethical decisions and communicate with a range of audiences.

After finishing this module, we expect that you will have achieved these specific **learning outcomes and assessment criteria**.

It's important to note that this module is exclusively taught online. This means all learning material, quizzes, assessments, communication, and additional resources will be available online only. A fully online module also means that you will not be able to fully engage with the content of this module if you don't have a device and internet connectivity. The best way to cope with comprehensive open-distance e-learning (CODEL) is to take full responsibility for your learning experience and environment. Your study world will be the environment you create - a room at home, a desk somewhere at work, the connections you make and the virtual networks you develop. In some instances, UNISA provides access to computers and the internet at our regional offices and other partner organisations. Nonetheless, it is advisable to possess your own computer and have internet access.

Please ensure you spend some time familiarising yourself with the module layout so you know where to find all relevant information like announcements, forums, assignments, etc. If you would like more training on myUnisa, please work through STU-100: Basic Skills in Using myModules on myUnisa ([Course: SS4IRR02 - Basic Skills in Using myModules on myUnisa](#))

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1.3. Why CAS4801?

Accounting education has undergone some changes in the past few years driven by skills needed for the future world of work and requirements from accounting education bodies such as the International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB). Figure 1 below illustrates the top core skills employers are looking for in 2023. It is clear that non-technical skills like creative thinking, resilience, agility, motivation, self-awareness, etc., are top of the list.

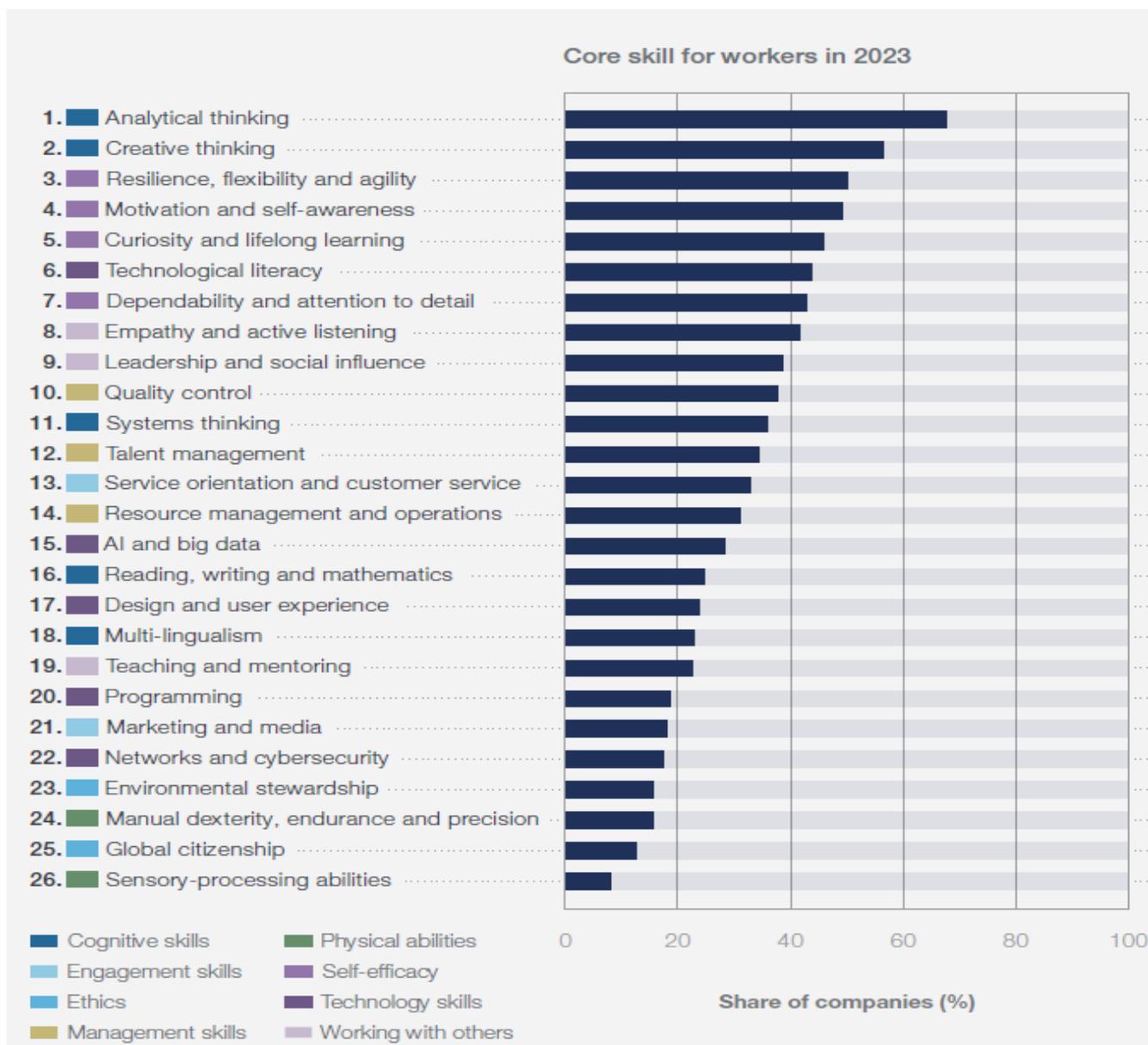


Figure 0.1 Core skills for workers in 2023. Source: (World Economic Forum (WEF) 2020:38)

Professional competence is now expected to go "beyond the knowledge of principles, standards, concepts, facts, and procedures; it is the integration and application of (a) technical competence, (b) professional skills, and (c) professional values, ethics, and attitudes" (International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB) 2019:7). Essentially accountants need other "non-technical" skills to be effective and relevant in the future.

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In designing CAS4801, we used the 2025 CA(SA) competency framework. Figure 0.2 below illustrates the CA(SA) 2021 Competency Framework in a snapshot.

VISION Chartered Accountants who are responsible leaders that contribute meaningfully to society using financial and non-financial information to create sustainable value.					
 PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES (Professional mindset) Personal, business and professional ethics Personal, professional and corporate citizenship Personal & professional development through lifelong learning					
 ENABLING COMPETENCIES (Professional skills)					
Business acumen Business internal and external environment Innovation & creativity	Decision-making acumen Critical thinking Integrated thinking Problem solving Judgement Professional skepticism	Relational acumen Communication Leadership People & relationship management Teamwork Self-management Emotional intelligence	Digital acumen Computational thinking Data knowledge and strategy Data analytics Automation New developments in technology Cyber security User competencies		
 TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES					
A. Strategy and governance to create sustainable value. Governance Model Business Strategy Aligning the Business Model with the Business Strategy Finance Strategy Tax Strategy	B. Stewardship of capitals: business processes and risk management. Reporting Fundamentals Business Systems and Processes Risk Management and Control	C. Decision-making to increase, decrease or transform capitals. Performance Measurement for Management and Other Internal Users of Financial Information Financing Decisions Investment decisions Use of derivatives Business valuation Performance management systems Financially troubled business Tax law implications	D. Reporting on value creation. Performance measurement for external users of general-purpose financial statements	E. Tax Governance and Compliance. Tax governance Laws & regulations	F. Assurance and related services. Concepts and principles of assurance engagements Audits of historic financial statements of non-specialised profit orientated entities Audits of historical financial statements of public sector entities Audits of historical financial statements of other non-profit entities Other related services

Figure 0.1 CA(SA) 2025 Competency Framework on a page. Source: The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) (2021:1-88)

This module have also been designed on the basis that you already have achieved learning in place which you did in your undergraduate studies. At UNISA, the relevant modules are list below and most of their content is available under the **additional resources folder**:

- Good business communication skills (CBC1501)
- Able to analyse and respond to a variety of text (CBC1501)
- Able to learn independently in an Open and Distance Learning context with minimal support (Unisa First Year Experience/Orientation)
- Have detailed knowledge, specific skills and applied competencies in Financial Accounting, Management Accounting, Auditing and Taxation (Degree in Financial Accounting).
- Be able to communicate what they have learnt comprehensibly in the medium of instruction (CBC1501)
- Be able to take responsibility for their progress (CAS3701)
- Have an understanding of ethics and ethical theories and be competent in ethical decision-making (CAS1501, CAS3701)
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1.4. Study plan

We will follow the study plan recommended for CTA2 students, which you can access [here](#). Please ensure you set aside sufficient time to engage with the module content during the year. To guarantee you stay up to date with the content of this module and your other modules, please prepare a study timetable for yourself to plan and make sure you allocate enough time for each module and are aware of all the key dates.

The module will be delivered over **five 'blocks'** following the School of Applied Accountancy planning schedule. Each block will focus on a specific element of the learning outcomes:

1. Citizenship and the role of the Chartered Accountant (CA)
2. Personal and interpersonal skills
3. Integrated reporting
4. Problem solving and decision making.

1.5. Teaching and learning approach

You are mainly expected to apply technical and digital skills, ethical principles and emotional intelligence in solving complex, real-life problems faced by accountants in an accounting context. The contexts that accountants operate in could be auditing, financial management, consulting/advisory, academia, public sector, etc.

The teaching and learning approach for this module is based on social constructivism, which is one of many philosophical views on how we come to understand or know (Savery and Duffy 2001:11). Social constructivism is based on the fundamental assumption that our sensations, and perceptions and knowledge cannot exist outside our minds. Knowledge cannot be given to others or transplanted from one mind to another; instead, new knowledge is created by each individual as they interact with ideas and the physical world (Yilmaz 2008).

Social constructivism recognises that knowledge cannot be transmitted and encourages viewing the lecturer as a facilitator of learning. We will share ideas, frameworks, and knowledge and show you how this can be applied to real-life situations, but deep understanding will only occur once you engage that content and show us what you have learned. You will have to approach this module differently because the extent to which you will learn, grow and develop is 100% dependent on your work and preparation.

1.6. Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

Specific outcomes	Assessment criteria
Internalise the values and attitudes expected of a Chartered Accountant in their role within society and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect on the values expected of a Chartered Accountant as a member of different communities (local-cultural, professional, national, African and global).• Integrate the values expected of a Chartered Accountant into a personal value system that is used to guide decisions and behaviour.• Apply a personal value system that shows regard for

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	<p>social and environmental impacts of decisions in a scenario or case study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the impact of a business decision on people, planet and profits.
<p>Develop personal and interpersonal skills necessary to be an effective professional in accounting and related services contexts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrate the use of relevant emotional intelligence skills to resolve a problem in a scenario. • Appraise the advantages, disadvantages, and consequences of different leadership styles and qualities in a scenario. • Criticise social skills applied by an individual in a scenario and provide appropriate alternative behaviours that could have been applied to reach desired outcomes. • Contribute as a team member or leader to manage resources and ensure the achievement of common goals.
<p>Distinguish between organisations that create value in the long term and those that have a narrow focus on profits by evaluating their integrated reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss emerging trends and forthcoming changes in financial and non-financial reporting. • Identify users needs and select an appropriate reporting framework considering the objective, usefulness and limitations of available reporting frameworks. • Apply the qualitative characteristics and principles of useful information. • Evaluate appropriate reporting boundaries. • Evaluate elements in the Integrated Reporting Framework • Analyse presentation and disclosures for the Integrated Reporting Framework
<p>Solve problems by integrating technical and non-technical competencies and communicating with a range of audiences in accounting and related services fields.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detect a problem in a case study or simulation. • Assess multiple alternatives to solve an identified problem in a case study or simulation. • Communicate findings, recommendations, and necessary action for solving the problem using relevant visual aids appropriate for the context and audience. • Review the problem-solving process and evaluate the effectiveness of the outcomes. • Correlate problem-solving with data analysis and automation in accounting and related services contexts.

Table 0.1 CAS4801 learning outcomes and assessment criteria

1.7. Assessment plan

CAS4801 will have two formative assessments and one summative assessment. The table below illustrates the different assessments and how they will contribute towards your final mark:

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Learning Unit	Assessments	Year Mark Contribution	Final Mark contribution	Summative assessment contribution
Learning Unit 1	1. Formative assessment	25%	40%	60%
Learning unit 2 Learning unit 3 Learning unit 4	2. Formative assessment	75%		

Table 0.2 Contribution of assessments to year mark and final mark

Due dates for formative assessments

Learning Unit	Assignment	Year Mark Contribution	Assignment Opens	Assessment Close
Learning Unit 1	Assignment 1	25%	16 April 2024	06 May 2024
Learning unit 2 Learning unit 3 Learning unit 4	Assignment 2	75%	03 July 20204	23 July 2024

1.8. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the dishonest act of copying, paraphrasing or summarising without appropriate acknowledgement of the words, ideas, scholarship and intellectual property of another person or persons. Assignments must be the product of your own study and your own thoughts and not merely a reproduction of the information (text, images, photos, diagrams, etc.) from articles or the internet. If you copy someone else's work, you are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism can take various forms:

- It can involve copying word for word (or copying with only minor changes) *without acknowledging* the source/s you used (e.g. articles or the internet).
- It can involve copying word for word from a source *without identifying the extracted section as a literal quotation* even if you acknowledge the source; in other words, if you fail to put a quote in quotation marks.
- It can involve copying the sentence structure of a source or copying the original idea of a source but changing the words of the original *without acknowledging* the source.
- It can involve taking so many ideas and words from a source that this makes up most of your work.
- It can involve deliberately providing incorrect information about the source of a quotation so the reader cannot trace its actual origin.
- It can involve handing in someone else's work as your own – including another student's work. We encourage you to form study groups or discuss aspects of your work with other students, but you must each prepare and submit your **own** assessment tasks.

The University views plagiarism as a serious offence.

If you commit plagiarism, you will be penalised and awarded no marks for your assessment task. Furthermore, you may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings by the University. This will seriously affect your chances of success in your studies. Although we encourage you to form study groups or discuss aspects of your work with other students, we require you to prepare and submit your **own** assessment tasks if you

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have been specifically instructed to submit a group assignment. Note that submitting a collaborative group effort is not plagiarism but inter-group consultations (when one group copies another group) and would be considered plagiarism.

Watch this video to understand the university process for any academic dishonesty:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVUQIMJvaMM>

Refer to the UNISA **Academic Integrity Policy**.

NOTE: if you use ChatGPT for this module, please always acknowledge this in your work and always request ChatGPT to show you the citations in your prompt, that way, it will give you the appropriate references for the information.

1.9. Group work

As indicated, you must work in groups for some of the work and assessments in this module. Your e-tutor will create groups on the e-tutor site, and you must enrol in a group. Watch the following video that demonstrates how to register and contact your group members.

<https://youtu.be/e5WIN3GVLSw>

All group members must please introduce themselves to other group members in the message drawer and set a time to meet online to complete assessments. All meetings will be held via MS Teams and will be recorded. Invite your e-tutor to all group meetings. After the meeting, make sure one member takes responsibility for saving the meeting recording and attendance register.

A tool that helps with group work is using a team contract; use the template attached ([CAS4801 Team contract template](#)) to create and sign a team contract at your first group meeting.

Please make sure:

- All team members sign the contract.
- Appoint a group leader, secretary and any other additional roles – discuss and note the responsibilities assigned for each role.
- Agree on values, etiquette and netiquette for the group and how you will foster a good working relationship with each other.
- Agree on the logistics for the team meetings; for example, what is your communication plan, who will send meeting invites, which platform will be used, and how will you share documents?
- Discuss how you will resolve any conflict should it arise or how you will deal with any team members who don't contribute their fair share

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1.10. Self-introductions



Source:

<https://www.expatscapetown.com/images/languagesinsouthafrica.png>

With online education, creating a sense of community is essential. Therefore, we encourage you to actively participate in the module through the discussion forums as you work through the module.

This year, we will all work closely together to develop the necessary skills to succeed in CAS4801. This module's core is solving problems and working as a team.

Please complete this [Quiz](#) so we can get to know you better as your lecturers.

1.11. Contact details

Below are the contact details for the lecturers and etutors. Don't hesitate to contact your e-tutor as a first point of contact for any content-related queries. Lecturers will also be hosting check-in sessions, which will be announced on myUnisa; please use these sessions to address any of your questions regarding module content.

Name & Surname	Designation	Email Address
Ms Ayanda Matsane	Senior Lecturer	matsaab@unisa.ac.za
Mr Papatle Mahlakwana	Lecturer	emahlapa@unisa.ac.za

Note: Only e-mails from myLife e-mail accounts will be answered; **follow** this link to learn how to set up your myLife email account: [Activate your myLife e-mail account to receive important information from Unisa](#)

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1.12. Reference list

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International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB). 2019. <i>International Education Standard 3, Initial Professional Development – Professional Skills (Revised)</i> . (ISBN: 978-1-60815-423-4). New York, USA: International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). Available at from: https://www.ifac.org/_flysystem/azure-private/publications/files/IAESB-IES-3-Professional-skills.pdf [Accessed 15 September 2023].