



The CA of the Future Training Programme

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

August 2024

The purpose of this document is to:

- Explain to all role-players involved with the training programme what is required of a trainee accountant in terms of each learning outcome, e.g., how the Professional Values, Attitudes and Acumens (PVAAs) look in practice; and
- Provide practical examples of the kinds of evidence a trainee accountant could provide that would demonstrate each learning outcome.

It is important to note that examples are provided as a means of explaining the learning outcomes and that the examples provided in this document are not necessarily verifiable or written in a format that would constitute acceptable evidence from SAICA's perspective. Trainee accountants should not simply copy and paste from these examples into their LORs and MUST remember that evidence needs to meet SAICA's quality requirements (specific, detailed, and showing an understanding of the learning outcome) and must be verifiable (i.e., capable of being verified by their reviewer, should they choose to do so). The context has also intentionally not always been defined with respect to the examples provided because it is so varied.

The guidance in this document has been presented separately based on the type of training environment, i.e., for trainee accountants in training offices that train through:

- Client engagements; and
- Rotations

In some instances, the guidance is similar and in other instances the examples look quite different. You are encouraged to look at both sets of examples as either or both may be relevant in your training environment. For example, some of the guidance relevant for external audit could also be helpful during an internal audit rotation.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

1. Professional Values and Attitudes

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>I1 Personal ethics: refers to a personal value system applied by an individual to decision-making, conduct and interaction between the self and others.</p>		
<p>(a) Act honestly and demonstrate personal integrity, accountability and trustworthiness INCLUDING while interacting with others</p>		<p>Required proficiency: 3</p>
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This value and attitude can be demonstrated in any context. It speaks to acting with “integrity” – one of the fundamental principles of ethics in the Code of Professional Conduct.</p> <p>Personal ethics are the core values and beliefs that are embedded for each individual and the foundation of their behaviour.</p> <p>Trainee accountants must be truthful, display a straightforward demeanor, ensure transparency, demonstrate a trustworthy nature and must be accountable for all actions.</p> <p>Actions, in all facets of life, must demonstrate an adherence to the principles of integrity both in personal and professional lives.</p> <p>Honesty is a facet of moral character and conduct that incorporates positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, and straightforwardness, along with the absence of lying, cheating, theft, etc.</p> <p>Honesty also involves being trustworthy, loyal, fair, and sincere.</p> <p>Note that this learning outcome is closely related to I3(a) and therefore trainee accountants are encouraged to be efficient and consider whether they could not also submit evidence for that learning outcome when they submit for this one and vice versa. Care should just be taken to ensure that the evidence is tailored to the requirements of the specific learning outcome.</p> <p>In documenting evidence trainee accountants should take care to address each aspect of the learning outcome describing the relevant interactions with others and reflecting on how they acted honestly, with integrity, accountability and trustworthiness.</p>	<p>Evidence can include personal interactions that positively reflect personal integrity when interacting with community members, colleagues outside the workplace or any other party whether in person or over social media (it is important to remember the reference to “while interacting with others” in the learning outcome and the other parties should thus always be identified), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility when a mistake is made. Not laying blame elsewhere and being prepared to deal with the consequences of your actions, no matter how severe they may be. • Being honest (not lying) when responding to work-related enquiries, e.g., when asked for feedback regarding the status of a task/assignment that is not going as well as expected. • Reporting findings in the management letter honestly even if the client or client staff may be unhappy or reporting inappropriate behaviour of colleagues even if it makes you unpopular. • Reporting others who have cheated (phantom ticking) to the manager or partner. • Complying with laws, regulations and policies both in the professional environment such as internal policies, regulations governing the training office environment and in a personal capacity (not infringing on traffic rules or driving under the influence, for example). • Ensuring personal tax returns are filed correctly and honestly. • Being truthful (not lying) in the recording of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actual productive time spent on a timesheet even if this differs from budgeted time allocated to the work. - Overtime on a timesheet – only recording actual overtime hours for productive work, not those worked because productivity was lost during working hours. - travel or other claims – only claiming for actual out of pocket expense or distance travelled. • Completing assessments, tests and exams with integrity, even when writing at home without a dedicated invigilator, etc. 	<p>Evidence can include personal interactions that positively reflect personal integrity when interacting with community members, colleagues outside the workplace, suppliers, rotation line managers, customers or any other party whether in person or over social media (it is important to remember the reference to “while interacting with others” in the learning outcome and the other parties should thus always be identified), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When participating in procurement activities, being alert to potential conflicts of interest when liaising with potential suppliers, for example, refusing offers of personal inducements. • Taking responsibility when a mistake is made. Not laying blame elsewhere and being prepared to deal with the consequences of your actions, no matter how severe they may be. • Being honest (not lying) when responding to work-related enquiries e.g. when asked to provide feedback regarding the status of a task/assignment that is not going as well as expected. • Being honest about attendance hours and absence. This includes taking leave and not attending to personal matters/ studies during work hours without permission. • Being honest about when you have not fully understood what is needed of you or when you need guidance from a manager/supervisor rather than wasting time or pretending to know what to do. • Reporting and recording information of any sort, honestly. For example, when capturing online sale transactions from the bank statement into the cashbook, ensure to be thorough checking references and amounts were captured correctly not recording high amounts in an attempt to inflate revenue amounts. • Reporting inappropriate behaviour of colleagues even if it makes you unpopular. • Complying with laws, regulations and policies both in the professional environment such as internal policies, regulations governing the training office environment and in a personal capacity (not infringing on traffic rules or driving under the influence, for example). • Ensuring personal tax returns are filed correctly and honestly. • Completing assessments, tests and exams with integrity, even when writing at home without a dedicated invigilator, etc. • Communicating openly and honestly when dealing with Manufacturers, Suppliers and Customers even in difficult conversations.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>I2 Business ethics: <i>refers to the ethical principles and values applied by the organisation to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the organisation, its stakeholders and society (King IV).</i></p>		
(a) Consider the impact of ethics within a specific business environment (a client or your training office) AND evaluate how ethics is managed in that context		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This value requires trainee accountants to notice the business environments that they find themselves in and to consider the ethical principles and values that are being applied by the organisation.</p> <p>Knowledge and an understanding of the value creation process, King IV, applicable laws and regulations, codes of conduct and policies and the decision-making structures, and identification of stakeholders will influence the extent to which the impact of ethics can be evaluated.</p> <p>Every business environment that trainee accountants find themselves within will provide the opportunity for them to consider the impact of ethics and how it is managed - either the impact of ethics being applied or the lack of ethical structures and practices. This includes different business units, clients, organisations and teams.</p> <p><u>In providing evidence trainee accountants should reflect on the specific business environment they considered, how they did the evaluation and what they discovered about the impact of ethics and how it is managed in that context:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Consider the impact of ethics:</u> <p>How important is ethics for that specific business? What would the implications of ethical and / or unethical business behaviour be for the entity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Evaluate how ethics is managed:</u> <p>How is ethical business behaviour managed / encouraged within the entity? Are there appropriate policy documents that govern / direct ethical behaviour? Are there whistleblowing or reporting mechanisms to deal with unethical behaviour?</p>	<p>Trainee accountants should consider and document the importance of ethics for a specific entity as well as evaluate policies and procedures in place to manage ethics in that entity and how it impacts on the business operations of the entity.</p> <p>In doing the above, trainee accountants could utilise some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When entering a new business environment or when there is a change in the business environment, trainee accountants could consider the way in which business is conducted and how ethics is managed. This includes understanding the vision and mission of organisations and how the business' ethics impacts stakeholders and society. Trainee accountants could engage with managers to understand ethical concerns and the structures in place to address and discuss ethical concerns. The first place that trainee accountants could do this is within the context of their training programmes (per the re-accreditation criteria C9 as contained in Annexure 2 of the SAICA Training Regulations). Trainee accountants could consider/ ask: "What is the impact of ethics in the environment of the training office?", "What steps/mechanisms are in place to report unethical behaviour?" and "How is ethical behaviour encouraged?". Trainee accountants could work through relevant policies and procedures, codes of conducts, values statements that are applicable to the training office or a specific client and evaluate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether they are ethical; whether they are being practiced/enforced/implemented within the environment; the consistency of intention behind the application of the policies; consequence management; and what the resulting impact on the business, stakeholder or society could be. Trainee accountants could also reverse the above by noting something that has a positive or negative impact on the business, stakeholders or society and then consider the ethics and practices that were in place or lacking to result in the impact. 	<p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate this learning outcome in relation to their training office, other entities in the group, customers, suppliers etc. and evaluate policies and procedures in place to manage ethics in that entity and how it impacts on the business operations of the relevant entity.</p> <p>In doing the above, trainee accountants could utilise some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the way in which the business is conducted and how ethics is managed. This includes understanding the vision and mission of organisations and how the business' ethics impacts stakeholders and society. Consider how ethics is managed in the various business processes, for example, risks that arise which include an ethical component and how these risks are mitigated, for example, how instructions are issued, approvals are made and the role of internal audit etc. Engage with line managers in a rotation to understand ethical concerns and the structures in place to address and discuss ethical concerns. Consider accreditation criterion C9 as contained in Annexure 2 of the SAICA Training Regulations) and ask: "What is the impact of ethics in the environment of the training office?", "What steps/mechanisms are in place to report unethical behaviour?" and "How is ethical behaviour encouraged?". Work through relevant policies and procedures, codes of conducts, values statements that are applicable to the training office or related entities and evaluate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether they are ethical; whether they are being practiced/enforced/implemented within the environment; the consistency of intention behind the application of the policies; consequence management; and what the resulting impact on the business, stakeholder or society could be. Reverse the above by noting something that has a positive or negative impact on the business, stakeholders or society and then consider the ethics and practices that were in place or lacking to result in the impact. When dealing with potential clients, suppliers etc., research and understand their business operations, industry practices and values. This will assist in ensuring that the services and solutions are aligned with their ethical standards and requirements. Ethics can be managed through open and honest communication, being transparent about services, pricing and any limitations or constraints, adhering to legal and regulatory requirements and maintaining integrity in the business's practices.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>I2 Business ethics: <i>refers to the ethical principles and values applied by the organisation to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the organisation, its stakeholders and society (King IV).</i></p>		
(b) Demonstrate how you contributed to the ethical culture of your business environment		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>An organisational culture is the “way we do things in this business”. It is a set of values, beliefs and standards that have developed over time, usually influenced by senior management as role models, for the way the organisation conducts its business activities.</p> <p>An ethical culture is this organisational culture but with specific reference to an organisation’s viewpoints / standards regarding the ethics of their business activities – what is allowed / accepted / regarded as ethically acceptable and what is not?</p> <p>Trainee accountants have an active role to play in contributing, either positively or negatively, to ethical cultures. Their behaviour affects this ethical culture – either through supporting it and encouraging others to follow suite to help strengthen the culture OR by undermining it and thus weakening it.</p> <p>Ethics is pervasive in every aspect of the business environment. Every action and interaction provides an opportunity to be open, honest and demonstrate professionalism. Trainee accountants should lead by example and contribute to the creation of a strong ethical culture within their training office.</p> <p>It is not sufficient for evidence to show that the trainee accountant <i>acted</i> ethically. They must be able to show how they influenced or contributed towards the ethical culture of the business environment.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this behaviour in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding colleagues accountable. • Providing input into ethical conversations and decisions that drive the right behavior. • Debriefing a team after an ethical issue was discovered at a client. • Providing training or leading discussions on ethics. • Addressing unethical behaviour to make it clear that unethical behaviour is unacceptable. This may be with or without the view to remediate or rehabilitate that behaviour. • Setting an example for staff by demonstrating the appropriate way to behave and noting the impact that has on future actions. • Raising concerns and providing input to change inappropriate policies and practices. • In each instance the action taken as well as the impact on the culture would need to be documented in the LOR. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this behaviour in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding colleagues accountable. • Providing input into ethical conversations and decisions that drive the right behavior. • Debriefing a team where an ethical issue was discovered. • Providing training or leading discussions on ethics. • Addressing unethical behaviour to make it clear that unethical behaviour is unacceptable. This may be with or without the view to remediate or rehabilitate that behaviour. • Setting an example for others in the organisation by demonstrating the appropriate way to behave and noting the impact that has on future actions of others. • Raising concerns and providing input to change inappropriate policies and practices. • Using the procedures and mechanisms in place to report unethical behaviour. Bringing matters/ethical issues to light even though there may be negative consequences/ personal/ business impact. <p>In each instance the action taken as well as the impact on the culture would need to be documented in the LOR.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>12 Business ethics: <i>refers to the ethical principles and values applied by the organisation to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the organisation, its stakeholders and society (King IV).</i></p>		
<p>(c) In the context of ethical dilemmas that arise relating to organisational ethics and corporate culture or when rendering professional services, use an ethical reasoning process (based on professional values and attitudes and the code of professional conduct) to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Identify threats to ethical principles, AND (ii) Analyse all courses of potentially unethical action as well as the consequences of each, AND (iii) Choose the appropriate course of action to solve the dilemma, AND (iv) Report ethical issues to higher levels of management, SAICA, legal or regulatory authorities, or others WHEN NECESSARY 	<p>Required proficiency: 3</p>	
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants are expected to resolve ethical dilemmas in a professional manner by applying the principles as set out in the IESBA, IRBA and SAICA Codes of Professional Conduct.</p> <p>An ethical dilemma is a complex moral situation in which individuals must choose between conflicting ethical principles or values, often with no clear right or wrong solution. This could for example involve a situation where there is a threat to one of the fundamental principles in the Code of Conduct. In the situation there is a choice to be made between (at least) two options, where both options have negative consequences. The person experiencing the dilemma is faced with the task of choosing the better of the two options.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should systematically work through the steps in the learning outcome to resolve dilemmas they encounter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Identify the specific <i>threat</i>. Which ethical principle is at risk in the situation being encountered? (ii) What are the available options / choices of behaviour in that situation and what are the possible consequences / implications to each choice. (iii) Having set out the choices, which choice would be the appropriate response (explaining their thinking behind this choice). <p>Where necessary, consider the need to take further action to report the situation to the appropriate higher authority.</p>	<p>Examples of ethical dilemmas that trainee accountants may encounter include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost productivity during the day and the choice of either billing time dishonestly or working in the time after hours. • Completing work to the required level of accuracy despite it taking longer than the budget allows for (dilemma is therefore to meet the budget, but with lower quality work or completing high quality work but exceeding the budget due to a delay outside of your control). • Knowing of a colleague who did not comply with firm policies or the code of conduct and deciding whether to report him/her or not • Knowing of a situation where a client did not comply with a law/regulation or conducted business in an unethical manner and deciding on the appropriate course of action. • Being tempted to do other work or attend to personal matters when meant to be paying attention in online training interventions. <p>On identification of an ethical dilemma, trainee accountants should follow the 4 steps outlined in the learning outcome (i.e., identify the principle at risk, define the dilemma by identifying the available courses of action, analyse these courses of action, choose the appropriate course of action, and report where required) and clearly document the response to each one (how the step was executed). The following considerations may be relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing adequate time to apply the steps. • Determining when to include or seek guidance or input from line managers/ mentors/ Human Resources/ SAICA etc. as part of the reasoning process, where applicable. • Demonstrating knowledge of and applying NOCLAR, the SAICA Code of Conduct, internal structures and procedures in step iv), where applicable. In applying this step, trainee accountants will also need to consider confidentiality requirements. <p>Example: Misrepresentation of Expenses</p> <p>Situation: The trainee accountant identifies evidence that the client's management is manipulating expense figures to meet profitability targets.</p> <p>Threats to ethical principles: Management has their own interest at heart to meet targets and earn performance bonuses. Not reporting this will lead to inaccurate financial records and the trainee accountant not acting with integrity.</p> <p>Courses of potentially unethical action and the consequences: The trainee accountant does not address the issue and the financial statements are issued with the manipulated expenses. This would possibly mean that management would get performance bonuses that are not accurate and this will disadvantage shareholders or other stakeholders. If it is reported it may impact the relationship with the management, and possibly the re-appointment as auditors.</p> <p>Choose appropriate course of action: The trainee accountant decides to gather additional evidence, consult with a more experienced colleague, and then address the concern with the client's management.</p> <p>Reporting Ethical Issues: The matter could be reported to senior management or the board of directors, there may be an obligation to report the matter to authorities.</p>	<p>On some rotations, trainee accountants may have specific opportunities to consider ethical dilemmas, for example, during an internal audit rotation, trainee accountants may be involved in investigations where they will be required to identify the threat, analyse the courses of unethical action and the consequences and respond accordingly including reporting on the matter.</p> <p>However, even where a rotation does not provide a specific opportunity to demonstrate this learning outcome, ethical dilemmas arise in many different situations and trainee accountants need to be alert to this at all times, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming aware of non-compliance with a law/regulation, for example a questionable tax practice, or business conducted in an unethical manner and deciding on the appropriate course of action. • Completing work at the required level of quality, despite resource constraints. • Knowing of a colleague who did not comply with organisation's policies or the code of conduct and deciding whether to report them or not. • Being tempted to do other work or attend to personal matters instead of paying attention in online training. • If a trainee accountant was part of the bonuses team and they see that the bonuses were distributed in an unethical manner including biases, favoritism and any deviation from the principles of fairness and meritocracy they would need to follow the 4 steps to determine course of action. • Potential misuse of website user data, which contradicts the agreed privacy policy and POPIA regulations. This would pose a threat to ethical principles such as respect for privacy, honesty and compliance with legal standards. <p>On identification of an ethical dilemma, trainee accountants should follow the 4 steps outlined in the learning outcome (i.e., identify the principle at risk, define the dilemma by identifying the available courses of action, analyse these courses of action, choose the appropriate course of action, and report where required) and clearly document the response to each one (how the step was executed). The following considerations may be relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing adequate time to apply the steps. • Determining when to include or seek guidance or input from line managers/ mentors/ Human Resources/ SAICA etc. as part of the reasoning process, where applicable. <p>Demonstrating knowledge of and applying NOCLAR, the SAICA Code of Conduct, internal structures and procedures in step iv), where applicable. In applying this step, trainee accountants will also need to consider confidentiality requirements.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>I3 Professional ethics: refers to the fundamental ethical principles and values applied by a professional CA to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the professional, its stakeholders and society.I3</p>		
(a) Apply the Code of Professional Conduct (COPC) fundamental ethical principle of integrity by way of general conduct, INCLUDING when rendering professional services.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Per the SAICA Code of Professional Conduct, acting with integrity requires a trainee accountant to be straightforward and honest in all their professional and business relationships.</p> <p>Integrity involves fair dealing, truthfulness and having the strength of character to act appropriately, even when facing pressure to do otherwise or when doing so might create potential adverse personal or organisational consequences.</p> <p>Acting appropriately involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Standing one's ground when confronted by dilemmas and difficult situations; or (b) Challenging others as and when circumstances warrant, in a manner appropriate to the circumstances. <p>Further to this, a trainee accountant must not knowingly be associated with reports, returns, communications or other information where they believe that the information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Contains a materially false or misleading statement; (b) Contains statements or information provided recklessly; or (c) Omits or obscures required information where such omission or obscurity would be misleading. <p>Please note the last part of the learning outcome, that the cumulative evidence should include instances of how this fundamental principle was demonstrated when rendering professional services.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being truthful in all their interactions, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The recording of true productive time on time records even when more time than expected was spent. - Providing honest feedback on the status of work assignments, even when they are not going according to plan. - Being honest when responding to enquiries, even if this means telling people things they do not particularly want to hear. • Identifying potential ethical threats/dilemmas (refer I2(c)) in their daily work and addressing those appropriately (including but not limited to threat analysis (both perceived and actual) from accepting an engagement and identifying appropriate safeguards). • Identifying and challenging (questioning) the behaviour of others where such behaviour may be potentially regarded as being unethical. • Taking care to ensure that any information provided by them to others is factually accurate by performing the appropriate checks on that information before it is disseminated. • Not withholding information unnecessarily where that omission might result in information provided being potentially misleading. Trainee accountants display integrity by proving the full picture (the good and bad, and not just the good) to ensure recipients can make an informed decision. An example of this could be where a trainee accountant is asked to provide a status update on their engagement – they should provide the full picture when giving the update and not just the things are going well. • Communicating openly and transparently with clients, regulators, and other stakeholders. • Reporting truthfully and disassociating with information that is known to be false or misleading. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being truthful in all their interactions, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing honest feedback on the status of work assignments, even when they are not going according to plan. - Being honest when responding to enquiries, even if this means telling people things they do not particularly want to hear. • Identifying potential ethical threats/dilemmas (refer I2(c)) in their daily work and addressing those appropriately (including but not limited to threat analysis (both perceived and actual) from accepting an engagement and identifying appropriate safeguards). • Identifying and challenging (questioning) the behaviour of others where such behaviour may be potentially regarded as being unethical. • Taking care to ensure that any information provided by them to others is factually accurate by performing the appropriate checks on that information before it is disseminated. • Not withholding information unnecessarily where that omission might result in information provided being potentially misleading. Trainee accountants display integrity by proving the full picture (the good and bad, and not just the good) to ensure recipients can make an informed decision. <p>An example of this could be where a trainee accountant is asked to provide a status update on a report that they are preparing – they should provide the full picture when giving the update and not just the things are going well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating openly and transparently with customers, suppliers, regulators, and other stakeholders. • Reporting truthfully and disassociating with information that is known to be false or misleading. <p>Trainee accountants should always be mindful when engaging in social media you do not want to bring the organization and/or the professions reputation into disrepute.</p>

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I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
13 Professional ethics: <i>refers to the fundamental ethical principles and values applied by a professional CA to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the professional, its stakeholders and society.13</i>		
b) Apply the COPC fundamental ethical principle of objectivity by way of general conduct, INCLUDING when rendering professional services.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Per the SAICA Code of Professional Conduct, acting with objectivity requires the trainee accountant to exercise professional or business judgement without being compromised by:</p> <p>(a) Avoiding Bias</p> <p>Conscious or unconscious bias affects the exercise of professional judgement when identifying, evaluating and addressing threats to compliance with the fundamental principles.</p> <p>Examples of potential biases to be aware of when exercising professional judgment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchoring bias. • Automation bias. • Availability bias. • Confirmation bias. • Groupthink. • Overconfidence bias. • Representation bias. • Selective perception. <p>(b) Avoiding Conflicts of interest</p> <p>These potentially arise when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking a professional activity related to a particular matter for two or more parties whose interests with respect to that matter are in conflict, or • When the interests of the trainee accountant and the interests of a party for whom they undertake a professional activity are in conflict). <p>(c) Avoiding undue influence of, or undue reliance on, individuals, organisations, technology or other factors.</p> <p>Trainee accountants shall not undertake professional activity if a circumstance or relationship unduly influences their professional judgement regarding that activity.</p> <p>Please note the last part of the learning outcome, that the cumulative evidence should include instances of how this fundamental principle was demonstrated when rendering professional services.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating conflicts of interest, noticing bias and subjectivity so as to remain objective. This includes refraining from engaging in activities that could compromise their actual or perceived objectivity and disclosing any potential conflicts of interest to relevant parties. [Please note that signing a declaration of interest is not in itself sufficient evidence. The trainee accountant must reflect on their thought process as part of the evidence.] • Avoiding financial interest in a client or loan to or from an assurance client. • A trainee accountant's treatment of inducements received from clients or potential clients will also demonstrate the trainee accountant's ability to demonstrate this task. • Treating directors' personal expenses accounted for as business expenses appropriately, despite the trainee accountant being potentially intimidated by the director. • A trainee accountant's response to having to ask a question to a client/supervisor/manager/ partner to in order to complete the work, but that client/ supervisor/manager/partner is seen to be a "difficult" person that gets upset easily; or the trainee accountant wants to impress the client/supervisor/ manager/partner with their knowledge and is therefore reluctant to ask a question that might seem silly. • Questioning / challenging information or assumptions for potential bias behind received and discovered information. • Mitigating the effect of bias by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeking advice from experts to obtain additional input; or - Consulting with others to ensure information is appropriate challenged as part of the evaluation process. - Demonstrating how they were not pressurised by someone to act in a certain way, even though this may have made life easier for them (e.g., not bowing down to a more dominant manager). • Demonstrating how they behaved in a certain way despite this potentially resulting in an unfavorable impression being created about them (e.g., not manipulating things to try and create a more favorable impression). 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating conflicts of interest (including <i>perceived</i> conflicts of interest), noticing bias and subjectivity so as to remain objective. This includes refraining from engaging in activities that could compromise their actual or perceived objectivity and disclosing any potential conflicts of interest to relevant parties. • Being alert to potential conflicts of interest when liaising with suppliers/ potential suppliers, for example, refusing offers of personal inducements during a procurement process. • Reporting information objectively. • Questioning / challenging information or assumptions for potential bias behind received and discovered information. • Mitigating the effect of bias by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seeking advice from experts to obtain additional input; or - Consulting with others to ensure information is appropriate challenged as part of the evaluation process. - Demonstrating how they were not pressurised by someone to act in a certain way, even though this may have made life easier for them (e.g., not bowing down to an assertive director/ customer/ supplier). • Demonstrating how they behaved in a certain way despite this potentially resulting in an unfavorable impression being created about them (e.g., not manipulating things to try and create a more favorable impression).

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I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>13 Professional ethics: refers to the fundamental ethical principles and values applied by a professional CA to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the professional, its stakeholders and society.¹³</p>		
<p>c) Apply the COPC fundamental ethical principle of professional competence and due care by way of general conduct, INCLUDING when rendering professional services.</p>		<p>Required proficiency: 3</p>
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Per the SAICA Code of Professional Conduct, complying with the principle of professional competence and due care requires the trainee accountant to:</p> <p>(a) Attain and maintain professional knowledge and skill at the level required to ensure that a client or employing organisation receives competent professional service, based on current technical and professional standards and relevant legislation; and</p> <p>(b) Act diligently and in accordance with applicable technical and professional standards. This encompasses the responsibility to act in accordance with the requirements of an assignment, carefully, thoroughly and on a timely basis.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should exercise due care and diligence in performing their work. They should comply with professional standards and guidelines, perform their work with a high degree of professional scepticism and ensure a high quality of work, and delivering as promised. Maintaining professional knowledge and skill and disclosing and working within the limitations of that competence, i.e. refraining from doing work that they are not competent to perform.</p> <p>Please note the last part of the learning outcome, that the cumulative evidence should include instances of how this fundamental principle was demonstrated when rendering professional services.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing complete working papers of the required quality as evidenced through minimal review queries on the technical aspects of their work. • Making specific reference to, and applying the latest acts, standards or other requirements when performing work. • Clearing review notes timeously, appropriately and diligently (and without having to still make corrections a second time). • Applying review queries received on an earlier audit to future audits to avoid a repeat of the queries. • If a trainee accountant is not able to perform a task him/herself, he/she obtains advice and assistance to ensure that the task is performed satisfactorily. • Self-review of working papers before signing them off as done (prior to submitting them for review by a more senior person), including spellchecking documents and e-mails prior to sending them onwards. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value through the manner in which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare/review reconciliations, • make payments, • prepare financial statements, • when assisting in or preparing the annual financial statements or interim reporting, • conduct internal audits or • complete any other day-to-day work. <p>Trainee accountants could make specific reference to and apply the latest acts, standards or other requirements when performing work.</p> <p>If a trainee accountant is not able to perform a task him/herself, he/she obtains advice and assistance to ensure that the task is performed satisfactorily.</p> <p>Trainee accountants could conduct a self-review of all work done (prior to submitting it for review by a more senior person), including spellchecking documents and e-mails prior to sending them onwards.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>13 Professional ethics: refers to the fundamental ethical principles and values applied by a professional CA to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the professional, its stakeholders and society.¹³</p>		
<p>d) Apply the COPC fundamental ethical principle of confidentiality by way of general conduct, INCLUDING when rendering professional services.</p>		<p>Required proficiency: 3</p>
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Per the SAICA Code of Professional Conduct, trainee accountants must respect the confidentiality of information acquired as a result of professional and business relationships and should:</p> <p>(a) Be alert to the possibility of inadvertent disclosure, including in a social environment, and particularly to a close business associate or an immediate or a close family member;</p> <p>(b) Maintain confidentiality of information within the firm or employing organisation;</p> <p>(c) Maintain confidentiality of information disclosed by a prospective client or employing organisation;</p> <p>(d) Not disclose confidential information acquired as a result of professional and business relationships outside the firm or employing organisation without proper and specific authority, unless there is a legal or professional duty or right to disclose;</p> <p>(e) Not use confidential information acquired as a result of professional and business relationships for their own personal advantage or for the advantage of a third party;</p> <p>(f) Not use or disclose any confidential information, either acquired or received as a result of a professional or business relationship, after that relationship has ended; and</p> <p>(g) Take reasonable steps to ensure that personnel under the trainee accountant's control, and individuals from whom advice and assistance are obtained, respect the trainee accountant's duty of confidentiality.</p> <p>Please note the last part of the learning outcome, that the cumulative evidence should include instances of how this fundamental principle was demonstrated when rendering professional services.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consciously restricting communication of confidential information or expressing frustration with the client/ work environment on social media; demonstrating an awareness of the public nature of the platform and its access by various parties to information that is potentially confidential. • Demonstrating an appreciation of the confidentiality of information, i.e., by not leaving client documentation lying around the boardroom/workspace and taking documentation/reports back to the client once that documentation has been used and is no longer needed. • Taking specific action when dealing with particularly sensitive information (such as the payroll or inventory costing documentation). Examples of this could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keeping workroom doors locked or secured against inadvertent entry. - Positioning computer screens such that they are not visible from doorways or entry points. - Working on documentation in the department that "owns" the documentation – not removing it and working with it elsewhere. • Returning sensitive documentation to the client at the end of each day, despite not being finished with it. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining integrity while managing confidential information such as trade secrets and NDA-related data. • Vetting suppliers during a tender process. • Handling sensitive information (such as when working with payroll information) with care, such that others do not gain inappropriate sight of it. • Demonstrating an appreciation of the confidentiality of personal information, communicating daily with customers, suppliers and other stakeholders. • Restricting communication of confidential information or expressing frustration with a stakeholder/ work environment on social media; demonstrating an awareness of the public nature of the platform and its access by various parties to information that is potentially confidential. • Locking their computer when walking away from their desk. • Ensuring that confidential conversations cannot be heard by unauthorized people when working remotely.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

I. ETHICS, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>13 Professional ethics: refers to the fundamental ethical principles and values applied by a professional CA to decision-making, conduct and the relationship between the professional, its stakeholders and society.13</p>		
<p>e) Apply the COPC fundamental ethical principle of professional behaviour (for example, in personal branding, business etiquette, the use of communication channels such as social media and the ability to control and express emotions appropriately) by way of general conduct, INCLUDING when rendering professional services.</p>		<p>Required proficiency: 3</p>
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Per the SAICA Code of Professional Conduct, the principle of professional behaviour requires a trainee accountant to:</p> <p>(a) Comply with relevant laws and regulations;</p> <p>(b) Behave in a manner consistent with the profession's responsibility to act in the public interest in all professional activities and business relationships; and</p> <p>(c) Avoid any conduct that the professional accountant knows or should know might discredit the profession.</p> <p>A trainee accountant must not knowingly engage in any business, occupation or activity that impairs or might impair the integrity, objectivity or good reputation of the profession, and as a result would be incompatible with the fundamental principles.</p> <p>Conduct that might discredit the profession includes conduct that a reasonable and informed third party would be likely to conclude adversely affects the good reputation of the profession.</p> <p>When undertaking any marketing or promotional activities, a trainee accountant must not bring the profession into disrepute. They must be honest and truthful and must not make:</p> <p>(a) Exaggerated claims for the services offered by them, or regarding their qualifications or experience; or</p> <p>(b) Disparaging references or unsubstantiated comparisons to the work of others.</p> <p>Please note the additional guidance provided in brackets.</p> <p>Also note the last part of the learning outcome which reflects that cumulative evidence should include instances of how this fundamental principle was demonstrated when rendering professional services.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately communicating (e-mails, verbal communication etc.) with the client and colleagues, demonstrating appropriate business etiquette and appropriate expression of emotions, particularly in instances of disagreements, confrontational or difficult situations (professional behaviour). • Being polite with colleagues and clients even when this might prove difficult to do; • When leaving a working space at the client's premises, ensure it is tidied up and left behind neatly; • Dressing appropriately for work – in a manner that upholds the image of the profession and is suitable for the occasion; • Arriving at work (or at the client) on time (or even early to ensure you are not late) and communicating to the appropriate persons (and in the appropriate manner) as soon as there is likely to be a delay; • Dialing in on time for online meetings and being suitably dressed to appear on camera if required; • Ensuring that backgrounds are appropriate for online meetings and that background noise levels are kept at a minimum; • When in office, being mindful of the open plan environment and behaving accordingly. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately communicating (e-mails, verbal communication etc.) with stakeholders and colleagues, demonstrating appropriate business etiquette and appropriate expression of emotions, particularly in instances of disagreements, confrontational or difficult situations (professional behaviour). • Being polite with colleagues, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders even when this might prove difficult to do; • When leaving a working space at the client's premises, ensure it is tidied up and left behind neatly; • Dressing appropriately for work – in a manner that upholds the image of the profession and is suitable for the occasion; • Arriving at work (or at the client) on time (or even early to ensure you are not late) and communicating to the appropriate persons (and in the appropriate manner) as soon as there is likely to be a delay; • Dialing in on time for online meetings and being suitably dressed and ready to appear on camera if required; • Ensuring that backgrounds are appropriate for online meetings and that background noise levels are kept at a minimum; • When in office, being mindful of the open plan environment and behaving accordingly.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

II. CITIZENSHIP, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>II1 Personal citizenship: <i>is used to indicate that there are rights/responsibilities to being a member of multiple communities.</i></p>		
(a) Demonstrate a responsive, valuing and tolerant approach to diversity (local or global) AND individual differences		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognise and respect others' values and differences and express a positive attitude towards all individuals regardless of race, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, etc. - Display awareness of, and accommodate, language differences in all cross-cultural communication - Demonstrate, through conduct and communication with others, an appreciation and acceptance of all colleagues and clients, particularly with regards to responses to input received from these individuals/ responses to queries raised or input sought by these individuals. - In instances of differences encountered as a result of cultural diversity, demonstrate an open-minded, respectful response. <p>It is important to note that simply being exposed to diversity (and / or mentioning the nature of that diversity) would not be sufficient to demonstrate this behaviour. This PVA is about how trainee accountants approach / respond to diversity and evidence must focus on what was done to accommodate / respect / value diversity.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in many ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a daily basis in all their communication and interactions with colleagues and clients. Diversity is likely to be encountered frequently and trainee accountants should actively seek ways to accommodate this. • When functioning as part of a multi-cultural team, respecting the diversity of the individual team members and encouraging inclusion (i.e., encourage participation from all team members, demonstrating an inclusive approach when planning team events and meetings). • By seeking information and clarity from colleagues/clients about differences that become apparent, and responding to these differences with respect and tolerance. • When reporting to group auditors globally, demonstrating an awareness of differences in communication styles and responding appropriately. • By being respectful of different religious viewpoints and accommodating any associated required practices such as the need to attend Mosque on Fridays or by taking care when eating your own meals during times when others may be fasting. • Communicating with a client or staff member whose home language is different to yours in a mutually understandable manner. • Working effectively with team members or clients whose work experience or education is different to yours – explaining matters in such a way that they can understand what you require/ask/say while being respectful of the gap in knowledge or education level. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in many ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting and creating an inclusive culture within the team/ department, being aware of cultural/ religious practices and accommodating individuals accordingly. This could include actively seeking information and clarity from colleagues/clients about differences that become apparent and responding to these differences with respect and tolerance. • Participating in or arranging events that are aimed at ensuring the work environment is more courteous, respectful and equitable for all, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity and inclusion initiatives. - Events highlighting the voice of marginalised persons. - LGBTQI+ events. • Being considerate of challenges that can arise in a global group for example, misunderstanding that arise due to different languages and customs and demonstrating a responsive, valuing and tolerant approach in addressing those challenges/differences. • Embracing differences, identifying how these strengthen the team and using the respective strengths to achieve efficiencies, e.g., multilingual trainee accountants could assist with translating for other team members in certain situations. • By being respectful of different religious viewpoints and accommodating any associated required practices such as the need to attend Mosque on Fridays or by taking care when eating your own meals during times when others may be fasting. • Communicating with a supplier/ customer/ colleague or other stakeholder whose home language is different to yours or who has a different level of education in a mutually understandable manner. • Working effectively with team members or clients whose work experience or education is different to yours – explaining matters in such a way that they can understand what you require/ask/say while being respectful of the gap in knowledge or education level.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

II. CITIZENSHIP, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>II1 Personal citizenship: <i>is used to indicate that there are rights/responsibilities to being a member of multiple communities.</i></p>		
(b) Describe the impact you have made on the community in which you live and work, through e.g. acts of philanthropy, social responsibility and environmental stewardship		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This learning outcome demonstrates that an individual can impact the environment/community positively or negatively dependent on the actions taken.</p> <p>Trainee accountants must identify how their individual actions contribute to and/or influence the community around them, their place of work and the environment.</p> <p>When submitting evidence for this learning outcome, trainee accountants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe what <i>they</i> did/what course of action they took and why; <u>and</u> <u>Explain the impact</u> (good and bad) that the action had on others, the environment, etc. <p>When documenting evidence in relation to participation in team/ group/ organisation-wide initiatives trainee accountants should consider <i>their</i> specific contribution.</p> <p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate this learning outcome through organisational or personal initiatives however they must remember that a reviewer will need to corroborate the evidence they provide.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying, implementing and/or demonstrating practices that promote the green initiative and have a positive impact on the environment. Highlighting personal initiatives that they undertake to get involved in community or societal upliftment projects. Further examples of projects provided by SAICA, which trainee accountants might encounter in their personal capacity include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprise development through skills development projects, providing mentoring and coaching to disadvantaged others, or providing free/cheap business services. CSR projects, such as building projects or repairs to infrastructure. Environmental stewardship projects, such as community clean-ups, investment in reduction of carbon footprint/ sequestration of carbon, waste reduction projects or recycling projects. Considering/looking after the environment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not printing unnecessary documents and rather making use of documents in electronic format. Make use of the recycling bin in the office where possible and appropriate. Not littering. Make use of public transport or lift clubs to office/clients to reduce carbon monoxide damage to the environment. Considering the health of others and only smoking in designated areas. Identifying and supporting any member of the team that is showing signs of struggling with mental health or socio-economic factors. Using water and electricity sparingly. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying, implementing and/or demonstrating practices that promote the green initiative and have a positive impact on the environment. Highlighting personal initiatives that they undertake to get involved in community or societal upliftment projects. Getting involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enterprise development through skills development projects, providing mentoring and coaching to disadvantaged others, or providing free/cheap business services. CSR projects, such as building projects or repairs to infrastructure. Environmental stewardship projects, such as community clean-ups, investment in reduction of carbon footprint/ sequestration of carbon, waste reduction projects or recycling projects. Looking after the environment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not printing unnecessary documents and rather making use of documents in electronic format. Make use of the recycling bin in the office where possible and appropriate. Not littering. Make use of public transport or lift clubs to office/clients to reduce carbon monoxide damage to the environment. Using water and electricity sparingly. Considering the health of others and only smoking in designated areas. Identifying and supporting any member of the team that is showing signs of struggling with mental health or socio-economic factors.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

II. CITIZENSHIP, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
II2 Corporate citizenship: <i>relates to the corporation's responsibilities/rights in society which has long been part of the field of business ethics</i>		
(a) For a business decision, weigh up the short-term financial benefits of that decision against its long-term strategic and/or societal impact (sustainability)		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>When considering a business decision (by a client or by your training office), evaluate the extent to which short term gain is measured against longer-term value creation. Sometimes seeking to maximise profit in the short term comes at the expense of longer-term value creation for the business.</p> <p>Being a responsible corporate citizen requires that long term sustainability of the organisation is always considered in decision-making. This requires that the needs of society as a key stakeholder to the organisation's long term success is taken into account.</p> <p>The role of the governing body of an organisation could be seen to be that of maximising the present value of all future outcomes to a decision. This requires that the needs of society / communities within which the organisation does business are considered along with the needs of all major stakeholders.</p>	<p>Examples where this could be demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When evaluating a client's business strategy when obtaining an understanding of the entity and performing risk assessment. Examples of matters that might be considered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The reasons for buying major assets, a change in the business model, unusual transactions outside the normal course of business. - Whether the client invests in SDGs? (refer to II2(b)). • Where trainee accountants perform an audit on performance objectives and identify that a client's performance appraisals are only linked to KPIs that are related to profit-generation, they have the opportunity to determine the impact of this on the long-term strategic objectives of the organisation. • For any significant business decision made by a client or the training office, identify the short term and long term consequences of that decision and evaluate the impact of that decision on the long term sustainability of the organisation in terms of continued support from society and / or communities that are affected by it. • Consider the degree to which the organisation's reputation is affected by decision taken. To what degree would organisations continue to be supported by their stakeholders as a result of decisions made by them? 	<p>Examples where trainee accountants may be part of a team or process that does the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering whether to offer financing or discounts to individual customers. • Deciding whether to outsource and import or to rather source locally and support community upliftment and education. • Negotiating or signing contracts with smaller suppliers (rent or buy/ pricing decisions) and considering the impact on the supplier. • Performing a capital budget, considering the strategic and societal impact of the decision over and above the financial aspect of the decision. • Deciding whether to automate a process or complete it using manual labour. • Considering the short-term financial gain of a process versus long-term environmental destruction. • Looking at strategic options - e.g., low profits on a particular deal/ transaction for securing a strategic long-term relationship. • Preparing a business case weighing up financial and societal measures and motivating how the project will achieve the required outcome(s).

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

II. CITIZENSHIP, VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>II2 Corporate citizenship: <i>relates to the corporation's responsibilities/rights in society which has long been part of the field of business ethics</i></p>		
(b) Consider the degree to which an organisation's (the training office or a client) strategy and/or business model aligns with the 17 SDGs (the Sustainable Development Goals as published by the United Nations)		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs identified 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) about which more information can be obtained through this link: https://sdgs.un.org/goals</p> <p>The 17 SDGs are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development <p>Taken together, these goals provide government, business and civil society with a universal roadmap to tackle urgent challenges, meaningfully engage with emerging risks and discover new opportunities for creating value.</p> <p>As a profession that recognises itself as a critical player in creating value for our country and the world, the chartered accountancy profession in South Africa is already contributing with stakeholders to champion projects to improve education, increasing jobs, enabling access to healthcare, innovating new technologies and much more which many members take part in.</p>	<p>When considering an entity's strategy and business model (a client or the training office itself), trainee accountants should evaluate if/how the strategy and model aligns with any of the SDGs.</p> <p>For example, when considering SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), trainee accountants could evaluate the extent to which a business demonstrates a responsive, valuing and tolerant approach to cultural diversity and individual differences.</p> <p>In doing so, trainee accountants could consider and evaluate some of the following aspects for an entity that relate to these 2 SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of policies to promote equal opportunities and employment equity in the organization (could be done as part of considering compliance with Employment Equity legislation and regulations). • Approach to BBEE – BBEE rating, selection of suppliers, etc. (could be done part of considering compliance with BBEE legislation where relevant). • Steps undertaken to resolve any conflicts/ misunderstandings as a result of any differences; in a responsive, valuing and tolerant manner. • Involvement in organizations with beneficiaries of different races, cultures, languages, genders etc. as part of CSR (Corporate social responsibility) projects. • Policies and contributions to open discussions to promote diversity – e.g., balanced engagement teams (no one left out/discriminated against, policy against racists/sexist comments, HIV policy, etc). • Inclusive corporate branding messages. <p>There would obviously be other opportunities to consider the degree to which organisations align with other SDGs – the two provided above are just examples – and do not mean to suggest that these are the only SDGs that a trainee accountant should focus on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainee accountants could also consider the desired outcome of any social responsibility projects run by organisations or their training office and which SDGs they may contribute towards. Companies may run food drives (SDG 2) or get involved in job creation initiatives (SDG 8) or environmental action (SDG 13), for example. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing management accounts and reports (budget versus actual, ratio analysis, stakeholder analysis) that include information relating to SDGs. • Preparing information to be included in an integrated report. • Participating in tailoring/ broadening the organisation's measurements (KPIs). • Evaluating suppliers' and clients' strategies and business models as part of conducting business/ procuring services/ concluding deals. • Participating in CSR projects with beneficiaries of different races, cultures, languages, genders etc. • Contributing to projects, policies and discussions that promote diversity – e.g., balanced teams (no one left out/discriminated against, policy against racist/sexist comments, HIV policy, etc.). • Contributing to inclusive corporate branding messages. • Participating in investing/ funding decisions. •

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

III. LIFELONG LEARNING VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>III1 Self-development refers to the planning and management of personal development and an appreciation of how personal strengths and weaknesses may impact work, learning and goal attainment.</p>		
(a) Demonstrate life-long learning by staying abreast of current trends and emerging issues OR by acquiring new knowledge, skills and experiences to remain relevant, INCLUDING in relation to digital developments		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants must display a commitment to staying up to date on current developments and emerging issues including the digital aspects.</p> <p>Life-long learning is a self-initiated deliberate act, focused on improving knowledge, skills and competence (personal, professional and technical.)</p> <p>It requires the identification of gaps in knowledge and skills and then seeking to fill those gaps. Typically, these gaps are then filled by acquiring new knowledge.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should actively consider the knowledge and skills required to be high-functioning in their professional role.</p> <p>The knowledge and skills should both be broad enough to upskill themselves in general terms, but also specific to the industry, circumstances or challenges they face from time to time.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should then plan and find opportunities for learning, through self- paced independent research, using resources available to upskill themselves, online digital learning or seeking on-the-job experience or coaching from others to obtain the identified knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Reading, listening and observing are part of the building blocks of learning and trainee accountants will have the opportunity to do all of these daily in their work.</p> <p>Using technology (digital acumen), in the current era is a skill that needs to be mastered to ensure life-long learning initiatives are achieved. Digital acumen (refer to the W acumen and learning outcomes) will be built throughout the training contract where the complexity of the subject matter and context will progress over the years of the training contract. This will in turn require ongoing learning.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where trainee accountants have been exposed to an engagement where unfamiliar accounting treatment principles were identified, they can formally capture the scenario, research the requirements, and present an evaluation to their peers/supervisors/managers. • By taking the lead in implementing updates and providing guidance on technical matters, where new technical updates are available. • Obtaining required knowledge/understanding of a certain matter(s) by asking appropriate and probing questions. • Conducting further research where needed while performing client engagements (e.g., research on laws and regulations applicable to a client, relevant audit and accounting standards, etc.) • Do further online training where the need is identified – e.g., to enhance Excel skills, be able to assist clients on Xero, improve business writing, etc. • Subscribe to websites that provide regular updates on emerging technology. • Attend on-line webinars / seminars about emerging technology. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this value by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying areas of improvement whilst planning future rotations and reflecting on past performance, including how technology could be used more efficiently. • Identifying ways in which they can upskill themselves, e.g. requesting specific exposure or training. • Registering and successfully completing courses/ updates/ talks (online or in person) that address identified development areas/ objectives e.g. attending technical updates, completing professional courses on project management or coding. • Conducting self-driven learning reflection against the plan and goals they have set. • Using multiple avenues to obtain new knowledge, e.g. research, reading, discussions, webinars, forums, summits, volunteering time to new projects, accepting new ideas and requesting further exposure. • Acquiring new knowledge, skills and experience on-the-job. • Investigating what is topical in the news whether it be fraudulent activity, cyber-crime, new innovations etc. and how this can impact on the organization. • Subscribing to publications and news alerts to keep abreast of regulatory, industry, economic and digital trends.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

III. LIFELONG LEARNING VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
<p>III1 Self-development refers to the planning and management of personal development and an appreciation of how personal strengths and weaknesses may impact work, learning and goal attainment.</p>		
(b) Demonstrate responsibility for your own development needs and opportunities AND set and monitor personal learning and development objectives		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants should demonstrate a positive attitude towards their training contracts and take responsibility for their development by seeking learning opportunities, as well as on-the-job or other experiences to address personal, professional and technical development needs.</p> <p>It is not enough to rely on their training office to recommend or determine a trainee accountant's personal development needs and opportunities.</p> <p>After self-assessment or receiving input from a senior, trainee accountants should take responsibility for their personal development needs by taking charge and being accountable, identifying and seeking opportunities for development and managing their own development plan, including self-reflection, assessment and determination of level of achievement of their development.</p> <p>The skills acquired through responding to identified development needs should be put into practice to ensure the trainee accountants apply / retain what has been learned. This is where line managers and mentors of trainee accountants will play a vital role in providing deliberate opportunities for trainee accountants to put the skills acquired into practice. Trainee accountants have a responsibility however to drive these initiatives, e.g., by identifying and/or requesting opportunities themselves.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate responsibility for their own development by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending all mandatory training courses. • Actively participating in learning opportunities such as training courses and feedback sessions. • Booking themselves on non-mandatory training courses (e.g., digital upskilling/ industry specific training) where they want to expand their knowledge in areas in which they are interested. • Actively seeking opportunities to work on engagements where they can demonstrate and get exposure to specific competencies. • Actively pursuing their academic studies and making academic progress a priority at each level of study: undergraduate/ postgraduate/ ITC/ professional program and APC. • Taking job assignments seriously and attempting to get the maximum benefit from each project and task that they are given. • Focusing on specific development points and plans that are communicated to them in their assessments and seeking to improve in those areas before the next assessment. • Completing performance appraisals and SAICA assessment forms (LORs) on a timely basis and in accordance with the training office's requirements. • Requesting feedback from supervisors and managers on the work they perform so that they can learn from mistakes made and improve in the future. • Preparing their own development plans and updating these on a regular basis to identify learning opportunities, relevant experiences and other activities which will enable them to remain up to date but also acquire new skills and knowledge to perform their work. The development plan could include progressing in their studies, developing specific client requirements such as industry knowledge, pervasive skills such as effective communication and critical thinking and addressing the skills and knowledge required to address specific development needs identified in their PDS meetings. • Performing a continuous self-reflection in their LORs to identify gaps in their knowledge or skills and then putting plans in place to close those gaps. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate responsibility for their own development by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending all mandatory training courses and linking this to personal learning and development objectives. • Actively participating in learning opportunities such as training courses and feedback sessions. • Booking themselves on non-mandatory training courses (e.g., digital upskilling/ industry specific training) where they want to expand their knowledge in areas in which they are interested or where they would like to add more value within the organisation. • Actively seeking rotations or opportunities where they can demonstrate and get exposure to specific learning outcomes. • Actively pursuing their academic studies and making academic progress a priority at each level of study: undergraduate/ postgraduate/ ITC (IAC)/ professional program and APC. • Taking job assignments seriously and attempting to get the maximum benefit from each project and task that they are given. • Focusing on specific development points and plans that are communicated to them in their assessments and seeking to improve in those areas before the next assessment. • Completing performance appraisals and SAICA assessment forms on a timely basis and in accordance with the training office's requirements. • Requesting feedback from supervisors and managers on the work they perform so that they can learn from mistakes made and improve in the future. • Preparing their own development plans and updating these on a regular basis to identify learning opportunities, relevant experiences and other activities which will enable them to remain up to date but also acquire new skills and knowledge to perform their work. •

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

III. LIFELONG LEARNING VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
III2 Adaptive mind-set and agility: refers to taking initiative to improve performance and well-being by reviewing and reflecting on work performance.		
(a) Work in an agile way by adapting and responding to changing practices, management and leadership styles, cultures, roles and /or work contexts		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants need to evidence agility by being able to work within guidelines (of the task) but without boundaries (of how they achieve it).</p> <p>Agility reflects an ability to think quickly, to be mentally aware of circumstances, and to then respond appropriately.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt to changing environments in an effective manner that allows for productivity and achievement of end goals within reasonable timeframes. Appreciate the differences in management and leadership styles and use the ability to adapt to change and ability to deal with diverse backgrounds to adjust to the different environments and thrive in such environments. <p><u>Different leadership styles</u> that trainee accountants may need to adapt to could incorporate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct – Direct leaders have high assertiveness and low expressiveness. They tend to lead by taking charge - also sometimes referred to as an “Autocratic style”. Spirited – Spirited leaders have high assertiveness and high expressiveness. They tend to lead by inspiring others. Considerate – Considerate leaders have low assertiveness and high expressiveness. They tend to lead by creating group harmony and encourage co-creation and participation. Systematic – Systematic leaders have low assertiveness and low expressiveness. They tend to lead by thorough planning. Maintain and uplift professional behaviour in the different work environments encountered. <p>Be able to keep up the same level of work quality even when circumstances change.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate agility by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making the necessary changes in work performed or updating working papers for unique changes or differences encountered at a client such as interest rates, exchange rates, new accounting or audit requirements, additional journal entries, subsequent events identified, etc. Responding to changes in legislation or standards that require a change in the way things need to be done or approached. Responding to changes in technology (hardware or software) that require the need to learn new and better ways of doing things. Being exposed to new people who require things to be done in new or different ways (e.g., working with new and different team members, managers or partners). Encountering new industries with different transaction cycles and information systems that need to be learnt. Adapting to changes in an audit or accounting standard that requires different procedures to be designed and performed. Moving into a new client industry that requires new knowledge or business practice and acquiring the required knowledge and adapting to the different business practices. Encountering a new transaction, gaining an understanding of it and auditing it. How they respond to unexpected changes to staff allocation or the planning board. How a trainee accountant responds positively to their progression from a more junior level to a more senior role with increased responsibility. Providing evidence of instances where they have had to adapt their behaviour to accommodate being on the receiving end of different styles of management adopted by their seniors or clients. Providing evidence of instances where they had to adjust their style of management (supervision of junior trainee accountants) – direct/spirited/considerate/systematic - to cater to specific circumstances and cultural context - in providing evidence of how this was demonstrated, trainee accountants could include recognition of the positive reactions of personnel from different cultures and personality types to their particular management style. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate agility by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responding to changes in legislation or standards that require a change in the way things need to be done or approached. Responding to changes in technology (hardware or software) that require the need to learn new and better ways of doing things. Being exposed to new people who require things to be done in new or different ways (e.g., working with new and different team members, managers, suppliers or stakeholders). Entering new rotations with different transaction cycles and information systems that need to be learnt. Adapting to changes in an accounting standard that requires processes to be adapted or new systems to be developed. Moving into a new rotation that requires new knowledge or business practice and acquiring the required knowledge and adapting to the different business practices. Encountering a new transaction, gaining an understanding of it and accounting for it or reporting on it. Responding to unexpected changes to staffing, deliverables or deadlines. Navigating the change from a junior trainee role to assuming more responsibility. Adapting to and accommodating different styles of management or reporting. Collaborating across different teams on a single project. Leveraging multiple processes, resources, people, knowledge and skills to solve a problem/ complete a task/ achieve an objective.

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III. LIFELONG LEARNING VALUES AND ATTITUDES		
III3 Emotional Intelligence refers to the establishment and sustaining of trusting relationships based on self-awareness, sensitivity to the situation, culture and people involved		
a) Understand and manage your own emotions in positive ways to communicate effectively, empathise with others, overcome challenges and/or defuse conflict.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Part of the journey of trainee accountants is to build Emotional Intelligence, which comes with experience and through experiencing different environments.</p> <p>An emotion is a feeling such as happiness, sadness, love, fear, anger, disgust or hatred, which can be caused by the situation that someone is in or by the people one is with. When a person understands his/her emotions, that person will be able to better regulate/manage them by stopping and thinking before acting and judging.</p> <p>Emotions are completely natural, and we all experience them. However, we need to be able to manage these emotions we experience while in the professional workplace in a positive, constructive way that assists us in achieving our objectives rather than derails us.</p>	<p>This learning outcome will be demonstrated through how trainee accountants manage emotions in a positive way when they find themselves in a specific situation, such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which feedback, especially criticism, is received - trainee accountants will regularly be provided with feedback in various forms. If they are sad, angry or discouraged by this, they should be able to hold back on expressing these emotions immediately, take time to understand that they are in a training contract and that the feedback provided is to assist them to grow and to do better in future and should not be received as a personal attack. Is expressing anger or breaking down into tears going to facilitate a constructive feedback session? • The way in which conflict is handled – e.g., don't act/talk while angry, stay calm and polite, don't display sadness unnecessarily in a professional environment, etc. • When deciding on the course of action when an error or NOCLAR is identified at a client – don't let sympathy or the fear of the client's reactions get in the way of taking the correct and ethical decision in the circumstances. • When assisting or giving feedback to fellow trainee accountants avoiding speaking/writing a query while angry, avoiding showing irritation, etc. • When communicating with others, use emotions to make a presentation interesting, instead of talking in the same tone of voice, not displaying disinterest in the conversation, etc. • Using emotions to show empathy where needed. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate emotional awareness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging and appreciating their own strengths and weaknesses, capitalising on their strengths and working on their weaknesses. • Observing how their emotions and perceptions influence their own behaviour and the behaviour of others. • Using their emotional awareness to encourage positive actions. • Regulating and managing their emotions to communicate constructively. • Trainee accountants can demonstrate emotional intelligence when managing stakeholders where there is a lack of understanding, or the stakeholder ignores/ overrides the trainee's recommendations. Trainee accountants will need to remain calm and explain.

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2. Acumens (Enabling Competencies)

Z. BUSINESS ACUMEN		
Z1 Business internal environment: <i>Using your understanding of the entity's internal operations to assist in the process of making strategic decisions and good judgements in a business or business division.</i>		
(a) Consider how an organisation creates value through its business model INCLUDING specific reference to its use of the six capitals referred to in the King IV report (Financial, Manufactured, Intellectual, Human, Social and Relationship and Natural)	Required proficiency: 2	
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>King IV defines a business model as being “an organisation’s system of transforming inputs through its business activities into outputs (products, services, by-products, and waste) and outcomes (internal and external consequences, both positive and negative and including the impact on the triple context – the economy, the environment, and society) that aim to fulfil the organisation’s strategic purposes and create value over the short, medium, and long term”.</p> <p>King IV references the term “inclusive capitalism”, arguing that this value creation in a business takes account of not just financial capital (the more traditional thinking behind value creation for a business), but also manufactured capital, intellectual capital, human capital, social and relationship capital, and natural capital (the six capitals).</p> <p>King IV defines capitals as “stocks of value on which all organisations depend for their success as inputs to their business model, and which are increased, decreased or transformed through the organisation’s business activities and outputs”.</p> <p>The 6 capitals referred to in King IV are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial capital - pool of funds available for use • Manufactured capital - physical/intangible assets such as land, equipment, software • Intellectual capital - knowledge-based intangibles • Human capital - people’s competencies, capabilities, experience and ability to innovate • Social and relationship capital - relationships, networks and the ability to share information • Natural capital - environmental resources that support the prosperity of an organization. <p>This can involve activities such as investing in employee training and development, improving environmental sustainability, and building strong relationships with customers and other stakeholders.</p> <p>These six capitals are inter-related – e.g., when you train your staff, financial capital could decrease, but human capital increases.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could obtain an understanding of the entity’s business model, during their “understanding of the entity” phase in planning an audit engagement including identifying how it creates value with reference to the six capitals. This could also include considerations of areas requiring improvement.</p> <p>In documenting this understanding, reference should be made to the relevant capitals that form key inputs and outputs.</p> <p>This understanding could be obtained as part of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performing planning and risk assessment activities for assurance or independent review engagements; • reviewing the integrated report for a client or potential client; • analysing a client’s revenue streams to assess the effectiveness of the business model in creating value for its customers, or • any other context which requires the trainee accountant to consider how an organisation creates value. <p>An analysis could also be performed of the training office itself and trainee accountants could consider how their own employer creates value through its business model with reference to the six capitals. This could include a stakeholder analysis, mapping business processes to assess how the organisation creates value and serves their stakeholders; or conducting a sustainability analysis to determine the organisation’s environmental, social and economic impact.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could consider how the training office, department, customer or supplier creates value through its business model with specific reference to its use of the six capitals.</p> <p>For the training office or a department, this could include a stakeholder analysis, mapping business processes to assess how it creates value and serves their stakeholders; or conducting a sustainability analysis to determine the environmental, social and economic impact.</p> <p>This could also be demonstrated when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing budgets; • allocating costs; • conducting risk assessments; • preparing information for or reviewing the training office’s integrated report; • compiling weekly tracker reports looking at profit margins, growth trends etc. (turnover vs margin); • analysing a department’s revenue streams to assess the effectiveness of the business model in creating value; or • any other context which requires the trainee accountant to consider how an organisation creates value.

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Z. BUSINESS ACUMEN		
Z2 Business external environment: <i>Using your understanding of the business' external environment, make quick, correct and/or focused strategic decisions and good judgements in a business or business division</i>		
(a) Evaluate the influence of the external environment (political, economic, tax policy, social, technological, legal and environmental) AND/OR industry factors (competitive advantage and threats, industry trends, emerging technology/industry disruptors, market opportunities, stakeholder focus) on an organisation's strategy, business model or processes		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>While Z1 focuses on the internal business environment, Z2 focuses on external factors affecting a business - i.e., how the external environment within which a business operates affects how the entity conducts its business.</p> <p>The external environment and industry factors can include both global and local influences.</p> <p>Just a few examples of local influences/factors that could affect a business include changes in legislation, stakeholder expectations or the regulatory environment or the availability of key services (inputs) such as water and electricity.</p> <p>A few examples of global influences/factors that could affect a business include changes to the general level of the world economy, foreign competition, emerging trends or changes in foreign exchange fluctuations.</p> <p>The learning outcome requires that trainee accountants "evaluate" the influence of these external factors. This implies a need to identify the factor and then argue how it has affected the entity's business model, strategy or processes. The impact of external factors could be felt across inputs (into the business activities of an organisation), activities (that reflect what the organisation actually does to generate value), outputs or even outcomes produced as a result of their activities.</p>	<p>This learning outcome will most likely be capable of being demonstrated during the planning and risk assessment phase of an assurance or review engagement. External factors that affect the entity's business model are likely to create audit risk. Trainee accountants should be considering the impact of external factors on the measure of audit risk.</p> <p>In so doing, they will then be able to evaluate the impact of these identified factors on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the entity's business model; • their measures of business success (e.g. on profits) and value creation (e.g. on the resources available to an entity and how the entity is able to utilise those); • their governance mechanisms; • their internal business and / or risk management processes; and / or • their processes of decision making, reporting, and / or compliance. <p>A trainee accountant could also consider the impact of external factors on the training office's strategy, business model or processes. For example, the impact of changes to the quality control system of the firm or IRBA requirements, on individual audit engagements or the impact of changes to tax legislation on compliance processes.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate the acumen through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the external environmental factors and the resulting impact on the key performance targets, budget allocations, reprioritisation of resources, strategy etc. • Preparation of a strategy roadmap for a department taking into consideration the impact of external factors. • Analysing business unit or entity KPIs against external factors for example as a contribution to the integrated report. • A performance management audit, identifying whether KPIs and targets are in line with the organisation's mission/value. • Evaluating the impact of changes to regulatory requirements and tax legislation on compliance processes. • Evaluating external factors such as load shedding, consequences thereof on the business and solutions that could be used to assist processes/ operations. • Conducting SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis to assess the organization's competitive position and strategic fit within their specific industry. • Contributing to the development of sustainability reports or impact assessments to communicating the organization's progress towards SDG targets and its broader contribution to societal well-being. <p>Analysing financial performance metrics in conjunction with social and environmental indicators to evaluate the organization's long-term resilience and value creation potential in the face of evolving local and global influences.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Z. BUSINESS ACUMEN		
Z3 Innovation and creativity: <i>Developing new concepts, innovative ways or new ideas promoting a business success or wide-spread use, using a questioning or inquisitive mind-set.</i>		
(a) Identify the need to address a problem or situation from a fresh perspective and challenge existing paradigms and ways of doing business AND/OR describe an innovative solution you came up with to address a business problem AND how you implemented this solution		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>“Innovation”, in the context of this learning outcome, means new/different to what was done historically, and <u>not necessarily something that no one has ever thought of before</u>.</p> <p>This learning outcome challenges trainee accountants to look for new ways of doing things that are more effective or efficient than what was done historically.</p> <p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate this learning outcome by doing one or both of the following:</p> <p>Option 1: <i>“Identify the need to address a problem or situation from a fresh perspective and challenge existing paradigms and ways of doing business”</i></p> <p>In this option, there is not a need to find any specific solution to an identified problem but rather a need to identify situations where a new approach is needed. In many cases, the way something is being done might be completely fine, having been honed over time to be the right way to deal with a specific situation. But this is not always the case and just because something is done in the same way as before, does not necessarily mean that this is the best way to do the thing.</p> <p>Can trainee accountants identify situations where the status quo should be challenged?</p> <p>Option 2: <i>“describe an innovative solution you came up with to address a business problem AND how you implemented this solution”</i></p> <p>This second part of the learning outcome is likely to be related to the first part but does not necessarily need to be done. In the first part of this learning outcome, trainee accountants are asked to look for opportunities to change / improve things. You cannot describe an innovative solution without there being a problem that needs to be solved...</p> <p>It is important to note here that this 2nd option requires the trainee accountant to also then describe how they implemented their solution to the problem, whether that be through something they did themselves or through referring the solution to someone else to take forward.</p> <p>Although not required, if trainee accountants can identify a need for change, can they then find innovative solutions that address this need?</p>	<p>Trainee accountants are likely to be able to find many instances of where they identified a problem or situation that needed to be addressed from a fresh perspective.</p> <p>Some examples of this within an assurance training office might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going back to the drawing board to refine or reconsider the design of a predictive analytical review during the fieldwork stage of an audit where the initial difference was larger than the acceptable difference; • Changes in a client’s business systems that require a change in audit approach; • New audit risks identified that now require a different approach; • Lost opportunities that need to be responded to – e.g., the auditors were not able to attend the client’s yearend inventory count and another plan now needs to be made. • Challenging the way audit evidence has been obtained historically and considering whether there might be better, more efficient ways of obtaining the necessary evidence; • Identifying ways of performing fieldwork that could be made more efficient or effective (for example, more effective systematic sampling workbooks, use of data analytics tools or new technologies or collaborating with colleagues differently to achieve efficiencies); or • Finding ways to automate processes or procedures across multiple clients. This may involve developing standardised templates, checklists, or workflows to improve efficiency and reduce manual effort. By challenging existing processes and finding more efficient ways of working, trainee accountants contribute to time and cost savings for the audit engagement. <p>Examples could also be found in relation to opportunities to improve the way a client or even their own training office conducts their business model. This could be through recommended changes to control activities for example that would prevent future loss, or through changes to accounting processes that might result in increased profitability for a company.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants are likely to be able to find many instances of where they identified a problem or situation that needed to be addressed from a fresh perspective.</p> <p>Some examples of this might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and recommending controls which could be preventative in nature, rather than detective. • Considering changes in regulations, and redesign processes to align to new requirements. • Identifying manual processes which could be improved with the inclusion of an automated element or with the use of technology. • Including local vendors on projects, addressing SDGs whilst managing organisation’s objectives. • Incorporating data validations in processes to reduce risk of error, minimise time spent, etc. • Reviewing the Supply Chain Management or monitoring processes and make recommendations to deal with anomalies or deviations. • Identifying any business problem and provide innovative solutions. <p>Applying fresh perspectives and innovative thinking to solve business problems, create efficiencies or drive business growth.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
Y1 Critical thinking: <i>Research, investigate, critically analyse, reflect and apply professional judgement to the evaluation of data and information from a variety of sources and perspectives.</i>		
(a) Use critical thinking to identify and question/challenge information or assumptions and potential bias behind received, discovered or researched information.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Critical thinking is the analysis of available facts, evidence, observations, and arguments in order to form a judgement by the application of rational, skeptical, and unbiased analyses and evaluation.</p> <p>This requires that the trainee accountant is able to interrogate underlying information or assumptions (either supplied or discovered) for potential prejudice and understand/ evaluate the impact that this may have on the results.</p> <p>Where the information comes from or who provided it may present certain biases that need to be considered. We shouldn't simply accept information just because it comes from a certain person (who we think is reliable just because they have a certain qualification, for example) or just because it is computer-generated. These are both examples of bias and trainee accountants need to be alert to whether they may exhibit bias in terms of information received.</p>	<p>Irrespective of the information or the purpose for which it is being obtained, trainee accountants should challenge the reliability of that information, ensuring that they have not displayed bias in their acceptance of it. There are likely to be many instances where information will need to be challenged, such:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When conducting research during planning to identify relevant factors (internal and external and quantitative and qualitative) that may have affected an entity. This research could involve obtaining information from multiple sources such as websites, discussions with entity staff, and through reviewing documentation (such as industry journals, internal reports or minutes of meetings). • When performing fieldwork on an engagement, trainee accountants should not just take verbal explanations at face value but consider who they come from and whether they make sense and are in line with your expectations (and in the case of audit engagements, whether corroborating evidence is available). • When assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern on any type of engagement – the client's assessment should be evaluated and corroborated against e.g., cash flow forecasts, actual performance after yearend, etc. • When receiving explanations from a client staff member in terms of identified differences arising from the performance of substantive predictive analytical review procedures. • When auditing accounting estimates in terms of ISA 540: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainee accountants should apply professional skepticism and judgement after requesting and obtaining information on management estimates. - Trainee accountants should test the underlying assumptions for management bias, by comparing these to industry norms, historic estimates, and outcomes, etc. - Trainee accountants should assess assumptions and outcomes of calculations, against the conclusion which would be drawn by a reasonably informed third party (documenting the findings in an audit working paper). <p>When conducting a financial statement analysis, a trainee accountant may come across assumptions made by the company in preparing their financial statements. They should critically evaluate these assumptions and question any potential bias or manipulation that may affect the accuracy or reliability of the financial information. By challenging the assumptions and potential biases, they can provide a more objective interpretation of the financial results.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in various ways depending on the rotation, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment decisions – during the due diligence review process trainee accountants should not accept information at face value or allow bias to influence their business decisions. Trainee accountants should question obtained information and check for reasonability. • Internal audit – trainee accountants will need to Interrogate information received, by questioning and challenging information, not allowing bias to influence their business judgement. This would allow them to suggest mitigating controls where necessary. • Budgeting process – trainee accountants should obtain an understanding (questioning and challenging of information) of the budget assumptions and understand the relationship to the business strategy. By varying the key assumptions, they could perform a sensitivity analysis on key budgets. • Reconciliations – when completing/reviewing reconciliations trainee accountants would need to identify, question and resolve reconciling items. • When reviewing supporting documents for contracts, procurement etc. trainee accountants will need to critically analyse and question information in an approach to safeguarding the integrity of business processes and ensuring high ethical standards. • Conducting peer reviews or internal audits of research reports, data analyses, or strategic plans to identify potential flaws, biases, or oversights and suggest improvements or alternative approaches. • Participating in cross-functional project teams or interdisciplinary research collaborations that encourage diverse perspectives, constructive feedback, and robust debate to enhance the quality and rigor of analysis. • Seeking input from mentors, supervisors, or subject matter experts on research methodologies, analytical techniques and interpretation of findings

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
Y1 Critical thinking: <i>Research, investigate, critically analyse, reflect and apply professional judgement to the evaluation of data and information from a variety of sources and perspectives.</i>		
(b) Use critical analysis and reasoning to uncover key and/or underlying issues, and/or identify connections or patterns across diverse situations		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Critical analysis is the detailed examination and evaluation of information, ideas or work.</p> <p>This typically involves breaking something down into its constituent parts or elements and then studying them diligently, highlighting both positive and negative aspects to then form a personal opinion on the whole.</p> <p>Critical analysis also includes questioning assumptions and employing logical thinking to uncover insights, see connections and/or identify underlying issues.</p> <p>Trainee accountants are expected to be able to apply critical analysis and reasoning across diverse situations which could include challenges or findings encountered during and audit or any other business challenge.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants will use critical analysis and reasoning strategies or techniques to uncover key and/or underlying issues, and identify connections or patterns across diverse situations that they work with, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In considering explanations received by a client for any potential misstatements identified; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do they make sense? - Can they be corroborated / Are they reliable? - Do they fully explain the potential problem? • In analysing populations to then stratify for sampling purposes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do all items share the same characteristics? - If not, how can we separate the population accordingly? - Do we need to extract anything? • When creating an understanding of a particular class of transactions to then develop an appropriate expectation as part of performing a substantive/predictive analytical review. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the key drivers of that account? - How do we include those drivers in the development of our expectations? - Where do we get reliable data from in support of those drivers? • When reviewing work performed by another auditor (a senior trainee accountant reviewing the working papers of a junior trainee accountant); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were all steps appropriately completed? - Does the evidence support the conclusions? or • When reviewing a client calculation of the determination of an impairment adjustment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the assumptions made appropriate? - Where has the information used been obtained from, and how reliable is it? <p>Is the method used appropriate for the client circumstances?</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in various ways depending on the rotation, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment decisions - during the financial modelling process, data will be analysed and trainee accountants could consider whether it is a viable investment, uncovering key issues and providing recommendations to ensure viability. • Cash management – trainee accountants will prepare and/or evaluate the cash flow forecast and working capital considering all assumptions. Trainee accountants could interpret the results of the cash flow forecast being able to understand major movements and extraordinary items. Trainee accountants should be able to provide solutions with regards to funding needs where necessary. • Management reporting – trainee accountants will need to obtain financial information from various business units for consolidation purposes and evaluate the information using financial analysis, ratio analysis and/or trend analysis. They can use this to identify any areas of concern and provide recommendations where necessary. • Monthly reporting – identify problematic issues with data and analyse the impact of these issues so as to ensure accurate and reliable information. • Internal audit - analyse risks and identify related control issues. • Stock taking - analyse risks and identify related control issues. • When reviewing supporting documents for contracts, procurement etc. trainee accountants will need to critically analyse and question information in an approach to safeguarding the integrity of business processes and ensuring high ethical standards. • Conducting gap analyses or performance reviews of organizational processes, systems, or practices to identify inefficiencies, bottlenecks, or areas of non-compliance, and propose targeted interventions to improve performance and enhance organizational effectiveness.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
Y2 Integrated thinking: <i>Integrative thinking is a decision-making approach for complex problems based on finding new, creative solutions rather than merely choosing the best solution from a list of alternatives</i>		
(a) Synthesise and make sense of ideas and information from a variety of sources to analyse and evaluate financial or non-financial information, create a design, formulate a plan, arrive at a viable solution to a problem, OR obtain a broader understanding of an issue, etc.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Synthesis and integration of information involves understanding a combination of components or elements to form a connected whole – the ability to see the bigger picture presented by the information obtained.</p> <p>A “variety of sources” reflects a diverse range of different origins or references from which information or data is gathered or obtained. It involves seeking information from multiple and varied sources to ensure a comprehensive and well-rounded understanding.</p> <p>Trainee accountants will need to be able to apply this when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> obtaining financial or non-financial information from various sources, e.g., documents, people, and/or the internet and will need to ensure that the information they obtain represents a broad holistic perspective that considers all angles. creating a design with a specific purpose or outcome in mind. This could involve conceptualising and outlining the structure, features, or characteristics of a product, system, or solution; formulating a plan i.e. developing a well-thought-out and organized approach or strategy to achieve a particular goal or objective. This could involve identifying the steps, resources, and timelines necessary to accomplish the desired outcome; arriving at a viable solution to a problem i.e. a practical and feasible answer or resolution to a problem or challenge. A viable solution takes into account the constraints, limitations, and available resources, and is capable of effectively addressing the underlying issue; or <p>obtaining a broad understanding of an issue i.e. having a comprehensive and holistic comprehension of a particular topic, situation, or problem. This could involve considering multiple dimensions, perspectives, and factors that contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding.</p>	<p>Evidence for this learning outcome could include the following examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When obtaining an understanding of an entity during the planning phase of an engagement, trainee accountants will need to conduct research to identify relevant factors (internal and external and financial and non-financial) that may have affected the entity. This research could involve obtaining information from multiple sources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> relevant websites, discussions with relevant entity staff, and through reviewing relevant documentation (such as industry journals, internal reports or minutes of meetings). In the process of developing an audit approach and designing/deciding on the most appropriate response(s) to address an audit risk for a specific client, trainee accountants will need to design appropriate procedures to obtain the information necessary to facilitate the relevant decision-making (regarding the approach and procedures to follow), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of various factors, such as the control environment, governance model and specific risk considerations to determine the appropriate audit approach. Use of audit/review findings from the previous year, changes in policies, procedures and processes in the current year and perform an analysis of how the circumstances have changed to identify what audit approach should be followed/determine what the impact on the audit approach will be. If the control environment was not adequate in the previous year, but management implemented new controls to mitigate the risks of misstatement (or vice versa – i.e., where the control environment was adequate before, but is no longer deemed that way), trainee accountants will be required to identify this when completing the planning process and develop responses to the risks. Considering the effectiveness of alternate mechanisms that can be used to obtain audit evidence. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in various ways depending on the rotation, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash management – trainee accountants will prepare and/or evaluate the cash flow forecast and working capital considering all assumptions. Trainee accountants could interpret the results of the cash flow forecast being able to understand major movements and extraordinary items. Trainee accountants should be able to provide solutions with regards to funding needs where necessary. Management reporting – trainee accountants will need to obtain financial information from various business units for consolidation purposes and evaluate the information using financial analysis, ratio analysis and/or trend analysis. They can use this to identify any areas of concern and provide recommendations where necessary. Management reporting – trainee accountants will obtain an understanding of a department or business through questioning a variety of stakeholders and, based on their understanding, identify key financial and non-financial performance indicators. Budgets – trainee accountants could consolidate information from various departments for budget purposes, interrogate whether information is in line with budget assumptions and make recommendations for cost control and cost efficiency. Financial Reporting – during evaluation or preparation of the integrated report, trainee accountants will need to obtain and understand information from a variety of sources and ensure that the integrated report contains all relevant information for external stakeholders. External Reporting - trainee accountants engage in synthesizing financial data, market trends, and customer feedback to develop strategic business plans and marketing strategies. Internal Audit and Tax rotations - trainee accountants could consolidate information from regulatory guidelines, financial statements, and internal controls to formulate compliance plans and risk mitigation strategies. <p>Corporate Social Investment (CSI) and Marketing - trainee accountants could integrate data from community needs assessments, market research, and stakeholder engagement to design impactful social responsibility initiatives and promotional campaigns.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
Y3 Problem Solving: <i>Collate and compare information from multiple sources to correctly define a problem, assess alternative solutions against decision criteria and make the optimal decision.</i>		
(a) Use a questioning mind-set during problem identification, analysis and resolution.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>As part of identifying, analysing and determining a solution for a problem/potential problem, interrogate the underlying information or assumptions (either supplied or discovered) for potential prejudice and understand / evaluate the impact that this may have on the suggested solution.</p> <p>A questioning mind-set proceeds from and is characterised by a feeling of doubt, uncertainty or scepticism, and/or being curious and alert to what is unknown in considering information.</p> <p>Remember this learning outcome is linked to a <i>problem</i>. In documenting evidence in an LOR, trainee accountants should identify the specific problem and ensure that the evidence documented addresses problem identification, analysis and resolution</p>	<p>Trainee accountants should provide evidence of problems that they identified and how they applied a questioning mindset in establishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there really was a problem - by not jumping to conclusions before all the facts were considered, challenging things and not just accepting them at face-value, not making assumptions, etc.; • How big or significant the problem really is; • How best to solve the problem – i.e., were alternative ways of resolving the problem considered and investigated before reaching a final solution and was the final solution critically evaluated to establish whether it is a workable solution. <p>A few examples of potential problems that trainee accountants could come across and for which the above mindset could be demonstrated include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in a PI score; • Transactions that have been incorrectly accounted for; • Disclosures that were omitted from financial statements or incorrectly included; • Staffing problems that arose; • Budget issues that arose; • Missing information or scope limitations that arose; • Subsequent events identified that required adjustment; • Instances where conflicting evidence has been received; or • Any other problems that arose during the engagement. <p>In each of the above examples of problems, trainee accountants would need to demonstrate how they applied a questioning mindset in understanding the problem, analysing the causes or consequences of the problem, and then in finding a solution to the problem.</p> <p>For example, if there is a change in PI score, the trainee accountant should then apply their mind to whether this has implications for the nature of the engagement. At the same time, they should be aware of / consider whether there was perhaps any voluntary election to be audited or reviewed or whether the client is perhaps exempt from the need to be audited or reviewed. Having considered these aspects, they should then determine the appropriate form of engagement and should communicate their viewpoint to their senior so that it can be taken up with the client.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants should provide evidence of problems that they identified and how they applied a questioning mindset in establishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there really was a problem - by not jumping to conclusions before all the facts were considered, challenging things and not just accepting them at face-value, not making assumptions, etc.; • How big or significant the problem really is; • How best to solve the problem – i.e., were alternative ways of resolving the problem considered and investigated before reaching a final solution and was the final solution critically evaluated to establish whether it is a workable solution. <p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in various ways depending on the rotation, for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when following up and clearing discrepancies on reconciliations during a financial reporting rotation, • maintaining accurate debtors accounts or • allocating limited resources as part of the budgeting process. <p>questioning control mechanisms and audit procedures to identify potential loopholes or areas for improvement during internal audit rotations</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
Y3 Problem Solving: <i>Collate and compare information from multiple sources to correctly define a problem, assess alternative solutions against decision criteria and make the optimal decision.</i>		
(b) Seek assistance from experts/specialists OR consult with others to obtain information, solve problems, maximise benefits from opportunities, expedite problem-solving, decision-making and/or reach conclusions		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Collaboration with more experienced colleagues creates efficiency in business processes (saves time) and provides additional credibility to information and decisions.</p> <p>This learning outcome involves collaborating with others through collecting their input, ideas and information (using different information obtaining techniques) to achieve the best output.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should be able to identify the need for use of an expert/specialist (someone who is very knowledgeable or skillful in a particular subject/ area or who concentrates on a particular subject/ activity or field) or when it is necessary to obtain the opinions or guidance of others to help solve problems in the most effective manner.</p> <p>Experts and specialists may be internal or external to the organisation / training office</p> <p>In providing evidence trainee accountants should indicate how seeking assistance from experts/specialists or consulting with others enabled them to obtain information, solve problems, maximise benefits from opportunities, expedite problem-solving, decision-making and/or reach conclusions. I.e. it is important to consider how the specific person who trainee accountant sought out of consulted, contributed to what the trainee accountant wanted to achieve.</p>	<p>There should be numerous opportunities for trainee accountants to provide evidence of how they reached out to others for assistance. A few examples of this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex accounting treatment or disclosures; • Complex IT issues; • Designing appropriate procedures to respond to identified risk of material misstatement; • Situations where input from an actuary, analyst, valuator are required. • Calculations of provisions of reserves where engineers, mining specialists, legal experts, etc. may be required to provide input • Advanced tax calculations or tax planning where the assistance of the tax department or tax partner is required. Also possibly where SARS has disallowed expenses or have other queries. • Implementation of new accounting or auditing standards may warrant input from technical specialists, including the possibility of restatement of previous year figures. • Obtaining legal advice regarding the disclosure of potential contingent liabilities in the AFS. • Or any other situation a trainee accountant identifies where they need assistance. <p>It is important to note that this learning outcome does not only involve the use of experts that are <i>external</i> to the training office. Evidence could also include how a trainee accountant identified the need for more senior decision-making or sign-off (e.g., a trainee accountant approaching their immediate senior, their manager or the technical department for assistance with a problem encountered) and proactively managed the requests and documentation of conclusions.</p>	<p>There should be numerous opportunities for trainee accountants to provide evidence of how they reached out to others for assistance. A few examples of this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex accounting treatment or disclosures; • Complex IT issues; • Designing appropriate procedures to respond to identified risk of material misstatement; • Situations where input from an actuary, analyst, evaluator are required. • Calculations of provisions of reserves where engineers, mining specialists, legal experts, etc. may be required to provide input. • Tax advice from a tax specialist or department may be required for advanced tax calculations, tax planning or deal structuring or perhaps where SARS has disallowed expenses or has raised other queries. • Implementation of new accounting or auditing standards may warrant input from technical specialists, including the possibility of restatement of previous year's figures. • Obtaining legal advice regarding the disclosure of potential contingent liabilities in the AFS. • In preparing the disclosure/ notes for the financial statements specifically relating to current tax calculations consult with appropriate departments e.g. group finance and tax. <p>It is important to note that this learning outcome does not only involve the use of experts that are <i>external</i> to the training office. Evidence could also include how a trainee accountant identified the need to approach their line manager or an internal specialist such as an actuary or tax department.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
<p>Y4 Judgement and decision-making: <i>The ability to make considered and effective decisions, come to sensible conclusions, perceive and distinguish relationships, understand situations, and form objective opinions.</i></p>		
<p>(a) Determine for alternative courses of action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. likely outcome, AND ii. apparent effectiveness of addressing the root causes of problems, AND iii. feasibility of effective implementation, AND iv. stakeholder support for effective implementation, AND v. ranking in relation to the other identified courses of action <p>AND then, having done this, select the most appropriate course of action.</p>	<p>Required proficiency: 3</p>	
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>When considering alternative solutions/ courses of action, trainee accountants will need to demonstrate their approach in a logical manner (as set out in the learning outcome):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Determine the likely outcome of each possible solution/ course of action. ii. Consider the degree to which the suggested solutions/ courses of action will adequately address / resolve the problem (consider the effectiveness and root causes). iii. Consider the practicality / feasibility of pursuing each possible solution / course of action in the context of the business environment. This could include considering resource constraints (such as available staff, required knowledge, and cost, for example). iv. Consider stakeholder support required for the implementation and/ or the extent to which there is stakeholder support for each proposed solution. <p>Decision-making often affects multiple stakeholders and effective decision-making should be done through consultation, and in collaboration with these stakeholders. Trainee accountants should identify the stakeholders affected by the proposed solution and consider the extent to which they are likely to support it or where further support is required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Having done the above, present the possible solutions/ appropriate courses in order of preference. <p>Trainee accountants must be able to recommend the most appropriate solution/ course of action based on their assessment and be able to give alternate preferences should their first recommendation not be desirable.</p>	<p>Evidence could be provided for this learning outcome directly or could be an extension to evidence already provided in other learning outcomes within Y1, Y2 and Y3, for example a trainee accountant may have identified a particular problem using a questioning mindset</p> <p>Having identified the problem, the trainee accountant now needs to consider possible solutions/ courses of action to address the problem and this learning outcome provides a framework/ approach that can be followed in doing this.</p> <p>Trainee accountants would have to present a coherent thought process, clearly outlining the process they followed and the matters they considered to arrive at their proposed course of action / solution.</p> <p>Evidence should address the 5 steps set out in the learning outcome.</p> <p>For example, if a trainee accountant is unable to obtain required information from a certain staff member who is unavailable, what are they going to do about that? There may be several possible solutions to this problem:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it appropriate to wait for the staff member to become available – how urgent is the information you require? 2. Consider whether there is anyone else at the client that may be able to provide the information? 3. Consider whether there is an alternate procedure that could be followed to arrive at the desired conclusion / achieve the desired evidence? 4. Consider whether you should approach your senior/manager for their input into a possible solution? <p>Trainee accountants should then be able to analyse these alternate courses of action in terms of the suggested framework. So, for each possible solution:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the likely outcome? E.g., Client irritation? Blown budgets? Insufficient evidence? 2. How effective would each solution be at obtaining the information you require? 3. How practical would each option be? Is it do-able without having to spend a large amount of additional time? Is it even possible - if there is no other staff member who could provide this information, then this solution is not feasible? 4. To what degree would there be stakeholder support for each option, recognising that the key stakeholders in this problem are the client and the audit partner. Would there be support from these parties in all possible solutions? Could the required support be obtained? <p>Having considered all of the above, trainee accountants should be able to rank the potential solutions from best to worst and then obviously pursue the solution that is most ideal.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating alternate solutions to problems within the context of new industry developments, value chain of the business industry and impact of such solutions in the value creation process (six capitals). • Assessing the rationale and validity of proposed solutions during the budgeting process while considering the limited resources on hand and sustainable value creation process. • Addressing repeat audit findings, evaluate the validity and appropriateness of suggested solutions, considering the practicality of implementation and preventing recurrence of further findings. • Internal Audit – identify findings and what the likely outcome would be of a control not being in place, suggest a mitigating control, report on the finding and the mitigating control. • Payment process – Trainee accountants should always check that all invoices are processed correctly and ensure that all back-up documents are in place. What would the outcome be if this is not in place, ensure a solution is put in place. <p>For all tasks involved (e.g. reconciliations, invoicing etc.) trainee accountants should determine the outcome of an action, address the root cause if there is a problem, consider the feasibility of the solution and speak to management.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

Y. DECISION MAKING ACUMEN		
<p>Y5 Professional skepticism: <i>Having a questioning mind, being alert to anything that may indicate misstatement due to error or fraud, critically assessing audit evidence.</i></p>		
(a) Apply a diligent and impartial mind-set when making decisions, making enquiries or questioning others.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Perform tasks (making decisions, making enquiries or questioning others) in a manner that demonstrates an unbiased and objective mind-set, and an attitude that includes a questioning mind, and being alert to conditions which may indicate possible misstatement.</p>	<p>Examples of professional scepticism include: considering what can go wrong during the audit, performing audit procedures to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence rather than merely obtaining the readily available evidence to corroborate management's assertions and critically evaluating all findings, regardless of whether it agrees or disagrees with management's assertions.</p> <p>In order to apply professional scepticism, trainee accountants must have a proper understanding of the client's business as well as the task at hand.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should demonstrate a questioning mind-set, and document considerations applied when making enquiries and questioning clients – i.e., were you able to challenge responses received / corroborate them against existing information at your disposal during your discussions?</p> <p>To be able to do this, trainee accountants will need to be prepared before entering into discussions. They will need to have a good understanding of the matters being discussed to be able to question responses received as and when they come up.</p> <p>This can be demonstrated at all stages of any type of client engagement and applies to any enquiries or discussions being held – and not only to those with client staff members.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate professional skepticism in various ways depending on the rotation, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment decisions - during the due diligence review process trainee accountants should not accept information at face value or allow bias to influence their business decisions. Trainee accountants should question obtained information and check for reasonability. • Internal Audit – questioning and challenging all information that is received and not allowing bias to influence their business judgement. • Budgeting process – obtaining an understanding of the budget assumptions and relationship to the business strategy by questioning and challenging information received. Varying the key assumptions to perform a sensitivity analysis on key budgets. • Fixed assets register and fixed asset roll – when analyses are done discrepancies and/or errors could be found during the processing phase etc. Trainees will need to understand what happened, question those involved using the correct tone etc. to solve the issues and be able to correct the errors. <p>Tax rotation – trainee accountants could conduct thorough research and analysis of tax issues, ensuring impartiality and accuracy in tax compliance.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X1 Communication Skills: <i>Effectively convey information and ideas to individuals and groups in a variety of situations in a focused way using verbal and non-verbal techniques and skills</i>		
a) Apply effective listening, interviewing AND/OR discussion techniques to obtain and clarify relevant information.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Effective communication, by applying effective listening, interviewing and discussion techniques, can be demonstrated by trainee accountants in various departments and roles. Communication will be between trainee accountants and various stakeholders both within and external to the organisation.</p> <p>Effective listening is a skill that essentially involves active listening techniques (being empathetic, expressing interest, and keeping an open mind to what is being said) to fully understand the information being imparted by the speaker and then following this up by providing feedback (clarification) to the speaker about what has been said.</p> <p>Stephen R Covey said; “The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply.”</p> <p>Effective interviewing is a skill that essentially involves asking probing questions, avoiding making assumptions without testing them and applying active listening skills during the interview.</p> <p>Effective discussion techniques essentially involve contributing to a focused concise discussion, adding value to the discussion, keeping an open mind (deferring judgement) and showing interest in the discussion.</p> <p>Whether a trainee accountant has done this effectively will be evident if they do not require a significant amount of clarity after an initial conversation and if they are able to carry out required tasks using the information gained through a conversation without having to go back for any clarity.</p> <p>This learning outcome allows a number of options. In documenting evidence trainee accountants should reflect on what listening, interviewing and/or discussion techniques they used, how this was effective and what information was obtained/clarified.</p>	<p>This learning outcome can be displayed by trainee accountants across a variety of contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When obtaining information from a client or colleague. • While participating in meetings such as planning meetings, assessment meetings, check-in meetings on engagements, meetings with clients, etc. • While participating in training in any form (face to face or online). • When engaging with the SARS call centre to clarify assessments, ask technical questions, follow up on administrative delays etc. <p>Evidence could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing interest in the content being imparted and encouraging the speaker to relay the information being requested. • Actively listening by giving the speaker their full attention, not interrupting the speaker or just listening to respond, and paraphrasing back to show that they heard and understood what was said. • Taking notes (mentally or in writing) about what is being said and then confirming / clarifying their understanding of what was said with the speaker. • Asking questions in such a manner that they receive all the information needed to perform the work. <p>When leading a meeting, not speaking the whole time, but rather facilitating the meeting to give everyone an opportunity to speak.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate this learning outcome in a variety of contexts, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In deal structuring/credit roles, the trainee accountants' role is to prepare a credit paper (as analysts in the team). Trainee accountants would be part of a deal initiation team that unpacks, structures and executes the deal. All the information is to be captured by trainee accountants in preparation of the credit paper. Thus, trainee accountants would need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Come to the meeting prepared. - Apply effectively listening techniques in those deal structuring meetings by paying attention to the detail so they can take notes, relaying a summary to the deal team of what they have understood to have been discussed, leaving the meeting having understood the key take outs of the meeting. - Apply interview techniques in those deal structuring meetings by asking probing questions, avoiding making assumptions by testing assumptions being made in the discussion. - Apply discussion techniques in those deal structuring meetings by contributing to a focused concise discussion, adding value to the discussion, keeping an open mind (deferring judgement) and showing interest in the discussion. • This skill is required in general when trainee accountants are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being briefed on new work to be done in any rotation for any type of work. - Obtaining information from various stakeholders to be consolidated into one piece of work. - Participating in meetings etc. • This is also demonstrated by trainee accountants not requiring a material amount of clarity post the initial meeting on pre-discussed content and by trainee accountants carrying out the task using the information gained in the meeting. <p>Trainee accountants based in a finance department may need to provide information to the external auditors. Effective listening to the auditors and asking clarifying questions will help ensure the correct information is provided.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X1 Communication Skills: <i>Effectively convey information and ideas to individuals and groups in a variety of situations in a focused way using verbal and non-verbal techniques and skills</i>		
b) Communicate verbally using clear and concise messaging that is professional, appropriate to the audience and situation, AND consider cultural and language differences (where necessary).		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants need to take care when communicating verbally to ensure that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly impart the knowledge they want to in a manner that is understandable taking into account who they are speaking to and the nature of the information they are sharing. Use appropriate language and tone depending on the person with whom they are speaking. It may not be appropriate, for example, to speak in the same way to a peer, an engagement partner and to a financial director of a client. Consider the home language of the receiver of the information being imparted and the degree to which they are comfortable with the language in which the message is being communicated. <p>Trainee accountants are reminded to consider each element of this learning outcome in documenting evidence, i.e. how was the verbal communication clear and concise? What made it professional and appropriate to the audience and situation? What, if any, cultural and language differences were considered?</p>	<p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate verbal communication with internal and external stakeholders and this could include many circumstances such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of their understanding and interpretation of information obtained; Presenting and defending views/ideas in a calm, focused and polite manner, and not using hyperbole or exaggeration; Explaining work performed to a senior or manager in a calm, focused and polite manner; Explaining work to be performed / giving an instruction to a more junior trainee accountant in such a way that that they understand what is required from them; Participating in or leading internal and external meetings / conversations / training sessions; or Delivering a verbal presentation or addressing a group. <p>Trainee accountants need to demonstrate their knowledge / understanding of language differences in cross cultural communication (exchange of information whether it be verbal or written – refer next LO) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respectfully and patiently communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds (fellow audit team members/ client personnel etc.) especially where they don't have English as their first language; Seeking / providing clarity if the verbal/ written exchange does not lead to immediate understanding; Speaking in a language that is understood by all members of the team who are present at the time of communication, rather than speaking in a language that is not understood by all. <p>Identifying people that are not participating in conversations or retreating from interactions and try to include them.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate verbal communication with internal and external stakeholders in a variety of circumstances such as:</p> <p>Trainee accountants in a credit/front line environment may need to present deals (in line with prepared credit papers) for consideration by a credit committee. (Credit committees are a very experienced audience that would have read the credit paper and would be ready to engage on the complexities presented in the credit paper.) In this instance, trainee accountants would demonstrate communication abilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring the content is factual and not using hyperbole or exaggeration. Ensuring the basics are covered (from a grammar, spelling and overall layout point of view). Ensuring the credit paper has been reviewed and review notes are adequately addressed. Clearly and concisely positioning the deal and its key terms and conditions to the experienced credit committee (Audience and situation). Positioning the key risks and mitigating factors of the deal. Confidently conveying the recommended position. Answering questions put forward by the credit committee in a manner that shows deal and client understanding. <p>This is one example, however all rotations across all functions require communication and presentation to a specific audience.</p> <p>When working remotely, verbal communication could be enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping your camera on to build rapport and improve presence. Ensuring your technology has been tested and you can confidently troubleshoot technical issues. Having camera (eye) contact. <p>Ensuring your background and physical space are not distracting in the video.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X1 Communication Skills: <i>Effectively convey information and ideas to individuals and groups in a variety of situations in a focused way using verbal and non-verbal techniques and skills</i>		
c) Communicate in writing using clear and concise messaging that is professional, appropriate to the audience and situation, considers any legal, ethical, regulatory and business requirements (where appropriate), AND considers cultural and language differences (where necessary)		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>The need to communicate effectively in writing will be prevalent throughout work performed by trainee accountants.</p> <p>Written communication will need to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understandable to the person reading it; • Sufficiently concise (gets to the point); and • Appropriate to the receiver (professional, legal or informal?). <p>Trainee accountants may need to apply professional judgement in the manner in which cross cultural communication is managed (level of technical exchange required, impact which language difference may have on the understanding of the key elements of the exchange etc.) and adjust their approach accordingly (e.g., where written communication may be preferable to verbal communication to facilitate better understanding).</p> <p>Trainee accountants are reminded to consider each element of this learning outcome in documenting evidence, i.e. how was the written communication clear and concise? How was it professional and appropriate to the audience and situation? What, if any, legal, ethical, regulatory and business requirements were considered? What, if any, cultural and language differences were considered?</p>	<p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate written communication with internal and external stakeholders in circumstances such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing working papers or similar documentation that record what they have done in a logical manner and format. • Drafting reports, letters and memoranda in a presentable format that is understandable, grammatically correct, courteous, etc. • Preparing company, directors and shareholder resolutions as part the secretarial services offered. • Drafting tax opinions, objections, appeals, payment allocation requests and provide supporting documentation to SARS for the clients in their portfolio. • Presenting information (formal and informal) to internal and external stakeholders e.g., financial results, proposed journal entries, journals for uncorrected misstatements (ensuring that such journal descriptions are clear and understandable). • Corresponding appropriately via email with clients, team members and their supervisors/managers/partners, taking into account the level of formality, logical layout, not too long, spelling and grammar, etc. • Documenting evidence in LORs in such a way that it is clear to the reviewers and evaluators what the trainee accountant did and how the documented action(s) demonstrate the learning outcomes for which the evidence was presented. <p>Communicating informally in writing on platforms such as MS Teams, WhatsApp, etc. (e.g., posting a question/comment in the chat function on MS Teams or Zoom during a meeting or training session in such a way that it is clear what is being asked/what is meant by the comment).</p>	<p>Trainee accountants can demonstrate written communication with internal and external stakeholders in a variety of rotations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance rotations – drafting reports, letters and memoranda in a presentable format that is understandable, grammatically correct, courteous, etc. • Tax rotations – drafting tax opinions, objections, appeals, payment allocation requests and provide supporting documentation to SARS. • Financial reporting – presenting information (formal and informal) to internal and external stakeholders e.g., financial results, proposed journal entries, journals for uncorrected misstatements (ensuring that such journal descriptions are clear and understandable). <p>This could also be demonstrated generally by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corresponding appropriately via email with team members, stakeholders, suppliers and customers taking into account the level of formality, logical layout, not too long, spelling and grammar, etc. • Documenting evidence in LORs in such a way that it is clear to the reviewers and evaluators what the trainee accountant did and how the documented action(s) demonstrate the learning outcomes for which the evidence was presented. • Communicating informally in writing on platforms such as MS Teams, WhatsApp, etc. (e.g., posting a question/comment in the chat function on MS Teams or Zoom during a meeting or training session in such a way that it is clear what is being asked/what is meant by the comment). <p>When drafting written correspondence, such as emails or reports, the trainee accountant should adhere to organizational guidelines and standards, consider legal and regulatory requirements, and ensures clarity and accuracy of content.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X2 Management & Leadership skills: <i>Work with others and manage and lead teams</i>		
(a) Proactively influence others to deliver high quality work that supports organisational goals through role-modelling of appropriate behaviour, providing training, advice, support and/or mentorship; and/or by transferring knowledge, skills and experience		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This can be applied widely and “others” could include trainee accountants, other staff, client staff, etc.</p> <p>This learning outcome is specifically in the context of taking ownership of a desired outcome and encouraging others to work towards achieving that outcome.</p> <p>This learning outcome is most likely to be demonstrated as trainee accountants start to take on a more senior role in the firm where they are given the responsibility of running projects / assignments / engagements that include junior staff.</p>	<p>Depending on the context of the training office, trainee accountants could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate this learning outcome during their daily operations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivating peers who may be struggling; - Leading from the front (setting the tone); or - Being a mentor to fellow trainee accountants in relation to their work and / or studies, etc. • Support, guide, advise and provide opportunities for team members or juniors on both professional and technical aspects and allowing them to then grow and expand in their roles. • Mentor others not only by guiding them in terms of what they should do, but by also portraying a good example through own actions and behaviours. <p>Trainee accountants can also demonstrate this learning outcome through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching / assisting / supervising more junior trainee accountants on an engagement; • Reviewing the work of more junior team members and giving performance feedback in a balanced and equitable way; • Checking in with other members on the team regularly to determine whether they are on track with regards to their budgets and whether they need assistance; • Offering mentoring sessions to discuss areas for improvement and feedback on performance; • Providing study-related assistance; • Providing training on difficult or new processes to peers or juniors; • Setting a good example for those around them; • Assisting clients – e.g., showing them how to pull certain reports from accounting/payroll packages if the client is not sure how to do that, providing advice/guidance through recommendations in the management letter; • Setting up time for coaching junior team members on an engagement; • Meeting with junior trainee accountants before an assignment starts to discuss any development needs that could be addressed during the engagement and then working with those trainee accountants to encourage them to work towards these; • When leading a team, create a pleasant working environment with weekly check-in and motivational sessions being set up for staff; or • Engaging with each of the team members to better understand them as individuals to identify what best motivates them and what difficulties there are that may stifle their learning. <p>In all cases trainee accountants should be seeking to motivate their team to achieve the desired outcomes of the assignment or engagement.</p>	<p>Depending on the context, trainee accountants could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate this learning outcome during their daily operations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivating peers who may be struggling; - Leading from the front (setting the tone); or - Being a mentor to fellow trainee accountants in relation to their work and / or studies, etc. • Support, guide, advise and provide opportunities for team members or juniors on both professional and technical aspects and allowing them to then grow and expand in their roles. • Mentor others not only by guiding them in terms of what they should do, but by also portraying a good example through own actions and behaviours. <p>Trainee accountants can also demonstrate this learning outcome through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching / assisting / supervising more junior trainee accountants on a project; • Providing performance feedback in a balanced and equitable way; • Checking in with other members on the team regularly to determine whether they are on track with regards to their budgets and whether they need assistance; • Offering mentoring sessions to discuss areas for improvement and feedback on performance; • Providing study-related assistance; • Providing training on difficult or new processes to peers or juniors; • Setting a good example for those around them; • Setting up time for coaching new team members on a project; • When leading a team, create a pleasant working environment with weekly check-in and motivational sessions being set up for staff; or • Engaging with each of the team members to better understand them as individuals to identify what best motivates them and what difficulties there are that may stifle their learning. <p>In a leadership role, trainee accountants could show how they motivated/ influenced others to achieve company goals by managing a project end to end, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlining the goals and scope of project in a way that inspires others to deliver. • Outlining how performance will be measured against standards (KPI setting – together with others). • Throughout the project: managing time, milestone completion, feedback, queries, quality assessment etc. <p>360-degree team feedback evaluating the leadership experience.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X2 Management & Leadership skills: <i>Work with others and manage and lead teams</i>		
b) Oversee team members' progress AND/OR performance in the context of tasks, plans, projects or operational activities		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants can supervise / manage a team and assess the progress of individuals within that team with respect to the achievement of their goals.</p> <p>The learning outcome refers to the ability to effectively manage and monitor the work of individuals within a team while working on various tasks, plans, projects, or day-to-day operations. It involves taking on a leadership role to ensure that team members are making progress, meeting their responsibilities, and performing at their best to achieve common goals.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome by effectively functioning as an engagement team leader through the supervision of junior trainee accountants, which could include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with them to monitor the degree to which they are meeting set expectations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By when certain tasks must be completed (deadlines); - Budgets within which set tasks must be completed; and - Deliverables that need to be achieved. • Following up on their progress with delegated tasks at regular intervals (regular progress check meetings, for example). • Requesting that trainee accountant provide regular updates on their progress and then monitoring that against expectations. • Communicating with trainee accountants in advance of set deliverables to see to what extent the trainee accountant is on track to achieve them. • Reviewing the work of less experienced team members, assessing the accuracy and completeness of their work, providing constructive feedback on areas for improvement, and offering guidance on how to enhance their performance. <p>Performing post-deliverable de-brief sessions where performance is measured against expectations and feedback is provided as to the extent these have been met.</p>	<p>In a leadership role/project leader role, trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing milestones for the project and communicating them to the team and obtaining buy-in. • Outlining the different deliverables within the milestones and assigning roles and responsibilities. • Communicating with team members in advance of set deliverables to see to what extent they are on track to achieve them. • Creating a calendar progress meeting plan for feedback and tracking to take place and/or using a digital tool to track progress. • Following up on progress with delegated tasks at regular intervals. • Holding team members accountable for meeting set expectations including deadlines/ deliverables and budgets. • Helping to resolve issues that have the potential to cause delays. • Providing feedback to the team and managers. • Reviewing the work of less experienced team members, assessing the accuracy and completeness of their work, providing constructive feedback on areas for improvement, and offering guidance on how to enhance their performance. • Performing post-deliverable de-brief sessions where performance is measured against expectations and feedback is provided as to the extent these have been met.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X2 Management & Leadership skills: <i>Work with others and manage and lead teams</i>		
c) Display effective delegation skills		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This outcome focuses on the ability to delegate (assign tasks to others) to achieve required outcomes in the smoothest manner possible.</p> <p>As trainee accountants progress through their training contracts and become more senior, they will be required to act as team leaders, which will involve the planning and management of resources (including staff) for assignments, and this will include the delegation of tasks in order to achieve the designed outcomes for the engagement.</p> <p><u>Just telling someone to do something or just giving someone work to do is not evidence of effective delegation skills. For delegation to be effective, the person delegating the task(s) should:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what tasks could be delegated and to whom they could be delegated, taking cognisance of the expertise and skills required to perform the tasks – i.e., assessing their skill and will levels to determine whether the work you want to give them is appropriate ; Clearly explain what is required (this might include training where necessary) and ensure that the person to whom the task(s) was delegated understands exactly what is required of them including the objectives, scope and expectations regarding output. Set expectations of when the delegated task(s) must be completed; Note that delegation is not an abdication of responsibility and therefore holding those to whom they delegated the tasks accountable by: : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following up with team members on their progress in terms of the task(s) delegated to them and assist when the team member needs guidance to complete the delegated work to the required standard; and Taking the necessary steps (which might include communication with a more senior person/manager/partner) to ensure that the delegated work gets done timeously and to mitigate any risks that arise. <p>Give performance feedback in a balanced way pointing out 'what you did well' in addition to pointing out 'what you could improve/ do differently'.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome by effectively functioning as a team leader through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasking a junior member of the engagement team with administrative activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making sure the engagement team has the necessary equipment such as internet dongles and extension cords and following up to ensure that that team member does attend to the required timeously or making enquiries about appropriate accommodation for the team during an away audit. Assigning components of the engagement to other team members by identifying the right people for the right job and delegating work to the correct levels AND exercising the other elements of effective delegation as set out in the column to the left such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular following up on the progress of delegated tasks with other team members / holding team meetings to assess progress with delegated tasks; and ensuring that the team works together to meet the defined deliverables; and reporting back on the status of the job to the supervisor/manager/partner. 	<p>In a leadership role/project leader role, trainee accountants could demonstrate effective delegation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining goals and objectives for individuals and the team. Defining the deliverables. Creating and maintaining organisational alignment. Clearly defining team roles and responsibilities. Communicating the strategy for initiation and execution. Carefully budgeting and scheduling. Identifying and communicating priorities and milestones. Establishing accountability and responsibility. Creating a communication plan. Monitoring and measuring progress against milestones and deliverables. <p>Providing ongoing feedback regarding progress and quality.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X2 Management & Leadership skills: <i>Work with others and manage and lead teams</i>		
<p>d) Manage conflict between individuals AND/OR across teams by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Recognising constructive versus destructive conflict and managing that conflict; AND/OR (ii) Assuming shared responsibility for the outcome of conflict; AND/OR (iii) Valuing individual contributions by team members; AND/OR (iv) Providing constructive feedback (both downward and/or upward) 	Required proficiency: 3	
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Conflict can arise in many ways including between colleagues or engagement team members, between juniors and seniors and/or between auditors and clients.</p> <p>Conflict may arise when there is a disagreement between affected parties about something important, but this does not have to be destructive or aggressive.</p> <p>Constructive conflict can be a healthy team dynamic which allows positive disagreement and promotes creativity, growth, and better solutions through diverse perspectives and open dialogue.</p> <p>Destructive conflict is harmful disagreement which damages relationships and impedes progress reflected in negative communication and lack of teamwork.</p> <p>Constructive feedback is about providing specific, helpful information, aimed at improving performance, skills, or behaviours in a positive and supportive manner.</p> <p>There are various models about how best to manage conflict with one of the most popular ones suggesting 5 alternative strategies to deal with conflict:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoidance (no resolution is obtained). 2. Play to win (at all costs – only one side wins). 3. Accommodation (agree to disagree - usually to preserve harmony but often with unresolved issues remaining). 4. Compromise (each party gives up something to reach a solution but neither party ultimately feels satisfied). 5. Collaboration (working together to find a win-win solution). <p>The optimal strategy will vary depending on the circumstances although the optimum strategy is usually to achieve an outcome that is a win-win for both parties.</p> <p>To demonstrate this learning outcome, trainee accountants will have to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the existence of differences in opinions and/or priorities within teams and between different teams. • Analyse the underlying causes of the differences and negotiate toward common ground. • Appreciate the differences that may arise with other stakeholders and consider plausible actions to resolve the differences. <p>Communicate respectfully with parties to arrive at an acceptable solution and decide on contingencies.</p>	<p>When trainee accountants submit evidence for this learning outcome, they should ensure that it is clear from the documented evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the conflict was; • How/why it arose; • How they approached it (including which conflict resolution model was applied); and • What the outcome was. <p>To be able to demonstrate all required aspects of this learning outcome, trainee accountants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should take care to fully understand the differing points of view being expressed (through applying active listening skills) and then apply the appropriate conflict resolution strategy to achieve the desired outcome. Conflict should be resolved in such a way that both parties feel satisfied with the outcome. • Need to be able to recognise when conflict occurs/ is occurring and would then take the initiative to attempt to work with parties to resolve it. • Could assist with conflict resolution between members within the team or between team members and the client. <p>Examples of conflict situations which trainee accountants might encounter and for which evidence of demonstrating this learning outcome could be submitted include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rating differences on LORs; • Disagreement / differences of opinion about the correct accounting treatment for a transaction; • Disagreement / differences of opinion about the most appropriate audit procedure/approach; • Disagreement relating to timesheet entries (rejected time), approval of overtime, leave, etc.; • Disagreements / differences of opinion relating to the number of hours needed to complete an engagement; • A client disagreeing with information requested – client does not believe that trainee accountant really needs the information; or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disagreement / differences of opinion relating to performance feedback given (to a more junior trainee accountant) or received (from a more senior person). 	<p>When trainee accountants submit evidence for this learning outcome, they should ensure that it is clear from the documented evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What the conflict was; • How/why it arose; • How they approached it (including which conflict resolution model was applied); and • What the outcome was. <p>To be able to demonstrate all required aspects of this learning outcome, trainee accountants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should take care to fully understand the differing points of view being expressed (through applying active listening skills) and then apply the appropriate conflict resolution strategy to achieve the desired outcome. Conflict should be resolved in such a way that both parties feel satisfied with the outcome. • Need to be able to recognise when conflict occurs/ is occurring and would then take the initiative to attempt to work with parties to resolve it. • Could assist with conflict resolution between members within the team or between team members and the client. <p>Examples of conflict situations which trainee accountants might encounter and for which evidence of demonstrating this learning outcome could be submitted include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rating differences on LORs; • Disagreement / differences of opinion about the correct accounting treatment for a transaction; • Disagreement / differences of opinion about the most appropriate process/approach; • Disagreement / differences of opinion relating to performance feedback given or received. <p>Trainee accountants could also demonstrate this learning outcome when participating in forums in which contentious issues are discussed.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X2 Management & Leadership skills: <i>Work with others and manage and lead teams</i>		
(e) While leading OR managing others, treat them respectfully, courteously and equitably		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This is applicable widely. "Others" could be trainee accountants, staff, clients, suppliers, etc.</p> <p>There will be many instances where trainee accountants are required to lead or manage others. This learning outcome relates to the manner or style in which that leadership is delivered. Even though in a more senior position, the trainee accountant still needs to be respectful, courteous (polite) and equitable (fair) in their dealing with their subordinates.</p> <p>When in more senior positions with their associated greater responsibilities and pressures, it becomes more difficult to do this. We only need reflect on the numerous movies and series that depict tyrannical bosses. Trainee accountants need to avoid becoming such bosses...</p> <p>Trainee accountants are reminded to consider each element of this learning outcome in documenting evidence, i.e. how did they lead/manage respectfully? How did they lead/manage courteously? How did they lead/manage equitably? The trainee accountant should cover the specific behaviours that made these interactions respectful/courteous/equitable.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating juniors and subordinates with respect, courtesy and equity in all their interactions with them, especially where things don't go according to plan; • Providing constructive, positive feedback in a respectful and equitable (fair) manner; • Being respectful, courteous and equitable (fair) when having difficult conversations with fellow trainee accountants/supervisors/managers/partners regarding work completed or performance assessments; • Dealing respectfully and courteously with client staff who have different levels of education and understanding. This may require keeping the peace while standing their ground. • Interacting courteously with clients with respect to outstanding information requested, items to be reported in the management letter, misstatements being done with respect and courtesy; or • Equitable allocation of work within the team that does not reflect favouritism. • Maintaining composure when speaking to SARS call centre staff on urgent matters. • Being respectful and courteous when delivering training and responding to questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting debt in a respectful, courteous manner. 	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating subordinates with respect, courtesy and equity in all their interactions with them, especially where things don't go according to plan; • Providing constructive, positive feedback in a respectful and equitable (fair) manner; • Being respectful, courteous and equitable (fair) when having difficult conversations regarding work completed or performance assessments; • Dealing respectfully and courteously with stakeholders who may have different levels of education and understanding. This may require trainee accountants to keep the peace while standing their ground. • Equitable allocation of work within the team that does not reflect favouritism. • Maintaining composure when speaking to Regulator/ SARS call centre staff on urgent matters. • Being respectful and courteous when delivering training and responding to questions. <p>Collecting debt in a respectful, courteous manner.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X3 People skills: <i>People skills are patterns of behaviour and behavioral interactions. Among people, it is an umbrella term for skills under three related set of abilities: personal effectiveness, interaction skills, and intercession skills</i>		
a) Display personal influence AND/OR negotiation skills to persuade others and/or build consensus		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This learning outcome essentially revolves around the ability of the trainee accountant to sway others' thoughts, opinions, decisions or actions through their approach, skills, knowledge, and persuasive abilities and / or to negotiate with others to reach mutually beneficial agreements or solutions in situations involving conflicting interests or goals.</p> <p>The outcome of this could be to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build consensus, i.e. promote agreement and shared understanding among a group by engaging participants, facilitating open communication, and seeking common ground to reach a collective decision or solution. Persuade others through effective communication and reasoning, encouraging them to adopt a specific viewpoint or take a desired action. <p>While there are many approaches to negotiation tactics, there are five common steps that most effective negotiations follow to achieve a successful outcome (How to Negotiate: The 5 Stages of the Negotiation Process - 2024 - Masterclass):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare 2. Exchange information 3. Clarify 4. Bargain and problem-solve 5. Conclude and implement <p>It is important to note that this learning outcome can only be demonstrated where someone is not in agreement with a proposed course of action or opinion. If others agreed with you or were happy to go along with a proposed action, there would be no need for persuasion or negotiation.</p> <p>Trainee accountants should thus start off by documenting where the disagreement lay before providing evidence of how they were able to change that person's mind about the initial disagreement.</p>	<p>Examples of where trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convincing a colleague, manager or anyone else to take a course of action when they were initially reluctant to see the trainee accountant's point of view. Convincing a client of the need to process a correcting journal entry that they initially disagreed with. Suggesting a different course of action or ideas and convincing others to support this. This could be in a group setting at university, in the workplace or any other team situation. Successfully advertising an event – i.e., get people to attend who were initially reluctant to do so. Building consensus (where there are different viewpoints) around a possible preferred plan of action to address a lack of audit evidence, scope limitation or difference of opinion. Negotiating timelines and deadlines for work that must be completed (with clients and supervisors/managers/partners). This would need to involve persuading them to agree to your suggested timeframes that are different to what they originally envisaged. When requesting information from a client, negotiate which information is needed by which date to complete the engagement, where a client was initially reluctant to provide this information. Persuading the partner(s)/HR/training officer to send trainee accountants and / or other staff on a training course. Persuading others to participate in office team sporting events/CSR projects when their skills are required and where they initially don't want to participate. Persuading others to support their idea in a group situation e.g., when planning a function. This would require a demonstration of what the other person's initial viewpoint was and how you managed to change that. Negotiating sponsorship for an event or publication where there was initial reluctance to support it. 	<p>Trainee accountants could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain an understanding of team members' behaviours, beliefs and personalities to understand their way of approaching and solving problems and use this insight to obtain buy-in for decisions proposed. Use personal strengths to guide others towards the desired outcomes by clearly articulating thought processes followed and ensuring that the process is backed by logical arguments. Appreciate the reasons for differences between team members and use this to build towards a common understanding. Convince a colleague, manager or anyone else to take a course of action when they were initially reluctant to see the trainee accountant's point of view. Suggest a different course of action or idea and convince others to support this. This could be in a group setting at university, in the workplace or any other team situation. Advertise an event and get people to attend who were initially reluctant to do so. Build consensus (where there are different viewpoints) around a possible preferred plan of action to address a lack of audit evidence, scope limitation or difference of opinion. Negotiate timelines and deadlines for work that must be completed. This would need to involve persuading stakeholders to agree to the suggested timeframes that are different to what they originally envisaged. Persuade your line manager/HR/training officer to send you/ trainee accountants and / or other staff on a training course which may not have been previously considered. Persuade others to participate in office team sporting events/ CSR projects when their skills are required and where they initially don't want to participate. Persuade others to support an idea in a group situation e.g., when planning a function. This would require a demonstration of what the other person's initial viewpoint was and how you managed to change that. Negotiating sponsorship for an event or publication where there was initial reluctance to support it.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X4 Relationship-building skills: <i>Build authentic relationships and effective collaboration across a wide range of teams and stakeholders</i>		
(a) Identify AND apply strategies to proactively build relationships that extend professional networks, alliances and/or cross-functional business partnerships		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This could apply to any professional working relationships and networks. Work can only be conducted by building relationships with those whom we interact – clients, suppliers, colleagues, subordinates and senior staff.</p> <p>We are very seldom adequately equipped to be able to do everything ourselves. We operate as part of a wider team of experts, and it is important that we develop these networks of experts to draw on when we need them.</p> <p>For example, a trainee accountant is not able to provide a client with all the services and expertise they might require. Having a network to draw on enables trainee accountants to provide appropriate support to clients when it is needed. For audit firms that offer multiple services, it is critical that trainee accountants understand these other services (and who to approach should they be required) to be able to recognise opportunities to utilise them in servicing clients holistically.</p> <p>This learning outcome means recognizing and implementing intentional approaches to create and nurture connections with individuals, groups, and organisations beyond the trainee accountant's immediate circle. These strategies involve taking active steps to expand professional networks and form alliances with others in a deliberate and purposeful manner. The aim is to foster collaborative relationships, share knowledge, resources, and opportunities, and ultimately contribute to personal and collective growth, innovation, and success.</p> <p>These strategic relationships that we seek to develop benefit both parties. Your understanding of their expertise may enable you to refer work to them or recommend their services to others and you knowing that there are people out there with services / expertise that you may need to draw on provides you with a valuable resource should you need it. In time, others might also call on your services where they need them.</p> <p>Networks should be developed both within the firm and outside of the firm.</p> <p>Display of this learning outcome requires 3 elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The identification of a strategy to build a relationship. This involves deciding on what needs to be done and how it should be done. 2. Applying the identified strategy. This involves following through on the strategy to achieve its desired objectives. How was the strategy implemented/ applied? What specific steps were taken to build the relationship? 3. A resultant extension to the trainee accountants network. Applied strategies that do not extend their network would not demonstrate this learning outcome. <p>In documenting evidence trainee accountants should take care to address these three elements and identify the specific relationships built.</p>	<p>Evidence could include the identification of any of the following strategies by the trainee accountant (these would need to be ideas that the trainee accountant comes up with):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced social media campaigns, e.g., building, and maintaining a LinkedIn profile that starts to include a wide range of connected persons that you may be able to draw on in the future, or who might approach you in the future. • Attendance of networking events e.g., SAICA functions/events for trainee accountants and training office functions that include staff from across the firm's service offerings such as a social inter-office/inter-firm sporting events. • Participating in workplace/inter-office/inter-firm forums to consider matters of mutual concern/relevance (e.g., when participating in study groups for CTA, ITC/IAC or APC or taking part in the communications forum or trainee accountant year group session discussions). • Contribution of technical content to periodicals and newsletters made available to peers and clients. • Targeted advertising campaigns – e.g., participating in recruitment interventions to build awareness of the firm in the general marketplace and to promote the services offered and opportunities at the firm (e.g., through interaction with vacation workers, sharing/liking posts of the firm on social media.). <p>Evidence should then always also include the application of the identified strategies.</p> <p>Evidence should be concluded with a reference to how the application of the strategy actually extended their network. Trainee accountants could make reference to who they connected with, for example.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By way of example, a trainee accountant might decide to grow their LinkedIn profile to enable them to connect with a wider network of people. They then need to decide how best to do this (their strategy) – they could for example invite people from the firm across multiple departments to join their profile? Whatever they then decide to do then needs to be applied. They could then indicate how their network has grown over time through this initiative by referring to the increased number of followers (and the departments from within the firm that they represent). 	<p>Trainee accountants could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify external stakeholders and build trust, rapport, and relationships via collaboration. • Identify external stakeholder relationships which may be mutually beneficial to the organisation and other party/parties. Trainee accountants will need an understanding of what the stakeholders' goals/needs are and how the organisation fits into their processes. The relationships may be long term with the focus on creating joint value. • Strategise around how to build relationships with seniors, teams, management, clients, one-on-one, etc. • Build relationships while: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assisting with special projects. - volunteering to assist on a project. - actively participating in networking events. <p>When trainee accountants rotate out of a training area, they could maintain the relationships they built reflecting on how these may benefit future rotations.</p> <p>Trainee accountants could identify key partnerships and apply appropriate strategies to strengthen their relationship with teams, staff in rotations, business relationships and relationships for their own professional development. Strategies could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being flexible. • Communicating clearly and regularly. • Gaining trust through delivering on promises made. • Staying consistent with messaging. • Meeting up with stakeholders. • Using data management/communication platforms to allow stakeholders to provide input. •

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X5 Teamwork: <i>Interrelated abilities that let you work effectively in an organised group. Teamwork happens when people cooperate and use their individual skills to achieve common goals.</i>		
(a) Work effectively with others as a resourceful and trustworthy team member through sharing knowledge, cooperating and / or collaborating to achieve team goals		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Part of being a professional is that trainee accountants need to be able to work and support their teams by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working effectively with others – so, being able to get along with others and being there to assist others to achieve the common team goal; and Sharing information and collaborating with others to achieve this team goal. <p>Sharing knowledge entails imparting information to other team members and facilitating cooperation (working together) and collaboration between all individuals within a team, so that each member may function independently to achieve their individual allocated tasks, with the aim of achieving a team goal.</p> <p>Documented peer-evaluations and self- evaluations at the close of a project/engagement/rotation can help create self-awareness of how others experience individual trainee accountants as a team member and can help trainee accountants set professional goals to improve on areas of development.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the engagement, each team member is allocated their components, and each team member is required to complete their work at the required level of quality and within the required time to ensure the audit is completed within time. It will be critical for trainee accountants to communicate throughout the engagement with the other team members on progress with their components. Furthermore, trainee accountants will have to ensure they complete their allocated work to ensure other team members are not negatively impacted. In an instance where the work of trainee accountants is behind, the trainee accountants will have to communicate to the other team members that their work is behind and what the plan is to catch up on the work. Assisting other team members to complete their work e.g., where one team member is responsible for the risk register on an audit, and another trainee accountant is responsible for the planning of a section – the sequence of actions and impact on each other’s deadlines needs to be considered so that the same end goal is achieved. Exercising awareness of team dynamics and collaboration, which are key principles to an affective team. Where a team is tasked to explore the best approach to a particular accounting treatment of a transaction, and one trainee accountant knows that a team member with the required knowledge has not contributed, the trainee accountant can encourage that team member to contribute to allow better collaboration towards the desired result. Actively engaging to evidence cooperation by asking to take on tasks, offering to lead aspects of engagements, participating constructively during team meetings, providing input without being asked for it, and helping others within the team for the benefit of the team. Assisting a more junior trainee accountant while working on a specific engagement, sharing knowledge regarding the client and/or applicable financial reporting/audit standards with others in the engagement planning meeting. Participating in study groups where information is shared, etc. Exercising professional judgement in establishing how knowledge obtained is documented in the working papers, and which knowledge should be communicated immediately to the audit manager and other team members (e.g. an error/journal entry in the section that they are responsible for that also impacts a section for which another member of the team is responsible for, potential NOCLAR/RI identified that may impact other areas of the engagement, etc.). Working with others through sharing information and collaboration to arrange an event – e.g., office social event (ultimate common goal being the success of the event). This learning outcome can also be demonstrated outside of the formal working environment by participating in a corporate social event such as action netball, action cricket or the in-house team building functions. Trainee accountants would just need to show how the elements of the learning outcome were addressed. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating or actively participating in information sharing sessions with other trainee accountants. Bringing know-how to team projects for the benefit of others. Collaborating with colleagues from different backgrounds. Actively engage to evidence cooperation, including: taking on tasks, offering to lead aspects of projects, attending team meetings, providing input without being asked, to help others within the team for the benefit of the team. Participating in cross-functional and cross-disciplinary projects. <p>Trainee accountants could also reflect on how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicated honestly with team members about abilities, progress on work, issues, etc. Delivered high quality work in a timely manner. Were solution driven being resourceful in a proactive manner. Contributed to a positive work culture. Worked overtime during tight deadlines to ensure the deliverable is achieved within regulatory, legislative or predetermined requirements. Shared knowledge/ideas (especially those innovative in nature) that may benefit the team/employer instead of keeping information to yourself for personal promotion or profit.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X6 Self-management: <i>Plan and manage personal development and appreciate how personal strengths and weaknesses may impact work, learning and goal attainment</i>		
a) Display self-management skills to work independently AND manage time and work pressure, being cognisant of the impact of this on others		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Working independently entails trainee accountants being able to work on their own without continued supervision/ input of their manager, while still delivering work of the required quality and including appropriate content.</p> <p>Some tasks require trainee accountants to work independently, whether or not they are working as part of a team. This would include sections of a project or an audit which they have to complete individually and perhaps even without input from peers, colleagues, or seniors.</p> <p>In almost all assignments there will be a requirement to complete it by a stipulated time frame (the deadline) and within stipulated time constraints (the budgeted hours). Trainee accountants need to manage their time in such a way that the deadline is met without exceeding the budgeted hours to be spent.</p> <p>Trainee accountants need to demonstrate an understanding that the work they are allocated has a knock-on effect for the team. If they miss their deadlines, this impacts on others who in turn may then not be able to meet their deadlines.</p> <p>Managing work pressure can involve working with diligence and persistence, which entails an ability to push through and commit to achieving a deliverable. This entails working hard and striving to do one's best, despite obstacles or challenges that are thrown in our paths – keep at it, no matter what...</p> <p>Self-management is displayed through the efficient planning and prioritising of tasks to achieve goals, meet deadlines, and managing time and related stresses/pressure whilst effectively and timeously communicating with colleagues to keep them updated as to your progress.</p> <p>Trainee accountants must be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. prioritise more urgent and important tasks, ii. plan for those that are important but can be done later, iii. delegate where required (involve others at the right time when the situation calls for it), iv. remain motivated and avoid being distracted. v. deliver the required outputs within set timelines/deadlines and avoid procrastinating on deliverables. <p>Not lose sight of the big picture – work hard to achieve work targets but seek to maintain a balance in life/between goals (personal and work, for example). It is not appropriate to throw everything at working towards one goal while sacrificing others.</p>	<p>To demonstrate this learning outcome trainee accountants could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identify tasks allocated to them and communicate effectively on timelines, including articulating delays, providing solutions and reprioritising. • Ensure the resource management system (e.g., the control of budgeted and actual hours) is kept accurate and up to date for the team. • Complete and manage the budget for miscellaneous expenses such as travel and meals. • Identify and manage any tasks allocated to shared service centers or outsourced to experts including managing the related budgets, deadlines and outcomes. • Identify any client or other delays in a timeous manner and adjust the plan/budget in order to deliver an optimal outcome. • Setting milestones / targets for themselves for client engagements as well as for internal processes (such as assessment). • Scheduling progress meetings with seniors to keep them advised. • Monitoring actual time spent on a job vs budgeted time per section and communicating any concerns identified to their immediate senior timeously. • Completing work within allocated time limits, without supervision, and while meeting the stated objectives without receiving lots of review queries (and not waiting until the latest possible moment to complete a task, especially when unsupervised). • Explaining how, despite obstacles or challenges being encountered, they were none-the-less able to complete the assigned work in time and to the appropriate quality levels. • Avoiding interruptions, managing work expectations and coping with the influx of emails/calls/notifications, including minimising the use of social media or other distractions during working hours where this does not relate to the task being completed. 	<p>Trainee accountants could demonstrate how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are able to work independently and manage the tasks assigned to them. • Are able to work without supervision, maintaining the quality of work produced and remaining reliable and transparent in activities and accountable for outcomes. • Are self-driven and motivated to complete tasks without procrastinating (i.e. not waiting until the latest possible time to complete task especially when unsupervised) and delivering high quality outputs maximising the use of resources. • Apply the Eisenhower Matrix (Urgent-Important Matrix) when allocated multiple tasks to self-manage and deliver within specified timelines. • Adhere to project deadlines and ensure that the planning and all sub-tasks are completed and submitted within the given deadline. • Provide feedback on work progress towards achieving project goals to line managers. • Have an understanding of the impact of their work on others and manage any challenges (including proactively communicating any issues) that could impact on delivery. •

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

X: RELATIONAL ACUMEN		
X7 Managing Others: Refers to working with others and managing and leading teams		
a) Develop, organise and prioritise tasks (recognising their resource constraints) and manage progress so as to achieve professional commitments/outcomes		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>While X6 relates to the management of one's own time in the context of allocated work, X7 focuses on the trainee accountant's ability to manage others.</p> <p>This learning outcome is associated with a more senior role where trainee accountants are given responsibility for assignments that involve the use of multiple resources (including staff, time, and technology for example).</p> <p>Trainee accountants will need to keep the end objectives in mind and organise the project in such a way that these objectives are met.</p> <p>The learning outcomes addresses both:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The initial planning process to ensure the objectives are met AND 2. The subsequent management of the project to respond to matters arising during it's execution in a way that ensures the objectives are still met. 	<p>Trainee accountants will get the opportunity to demonstrate this learning outcome when they assume responsibility for running engagements of any kind.</p> <p>They can demonstrate this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining or suggesting staff allocations necessary for the engagement (number and levels of experience); • Setting time budgets for engagement staff that are realistic; • Setting time frames within which allocated sections of work need to be completed in order for the end deadlines to be met; • Attending to administrative matters (such as travel logistics, accommodation, necessary software and hardware) that need to be arranged for the assignment to be completed; and • Preparing documented project plans / budgets that reflect this. <p>Trainee accountants would also need to be able to demonstrate their ability to manage the assignment in terms of the plans established above. They should demonstrate an ability to respond to changes in circumstances that require the original plan to be amended in such a way that the original outcomes are still achieved. These instances could include circumstances such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff who become ill; • Unavailability of expected information; or • Tasks taking longer (or shorter) than originally expected. 	<p>Trainee accountants will get the opportunity to demonstrate this learning outcome when they assume responsibility for running projects of any kind.</p> <p>They can demonstrate this through planning activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining or suggesting staff allocations necessary for the project (number and levels of experience); • Setting budgets that are realistic; • Setting realistic timeframes and deliverables; • Attending to administrative matters (such as logistics, software and hardware) that need to be arranged for the project to be completed; and • Preparing documented project plans that reflect this. • Trainee accountants would also need to be able to demonstrate their ability to manage the project in terms of the plans established above and an ability to respond to changes in circumstances that require the original plan to be amended in such a way that the original outcomes are still achieved, for example, staff who become ill; unavailability of expected information; or tasks taking longer (or shorter) than originally expected.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W1 Computational thinking: <i>Computational thinking is a set of problem-solving methods that involve expressing problems and their solutions in ways that a computer could also execute.</i>		
(a) Decompose a problem into smaller sub-problems AND then find patterns (similarities, shared characteristics) among the sub-problems AND determine relevant characteristics AND/OR discard irrelevant characteristics		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This can be applied in any context where a problem can be decomposed into smaller sub-components.</p> <p>Finding solutions to problems often starts with being able to analyse the situation and break the problem down into contributing elements or aspects, which can then each be addressed as part of the overall solution.</p> <p>Finding patterns (similarities, shared characteristics) and determining relevant characteristics and/or discarding irrelevant characteristics can be applied in sorting, filtering and analysis of any information/data or in forming technical opinions where information is selected or disregarded based on its relevancy to the problem faced.</p> <p>This acumen may therefore be demonstrated together with acumens related to problem-solving (Y1 and Y3 in particular). In some instances, trainee accountants could also draw from this learning outcome to demonstrate W3 (data analytics) and vice versa.</p> <p>In essence, although this acumen is primarily seen to be a digital acumen, trainee accountants can apply this acumen in the analysis of <i>any</i> problem they face before they start tackling it and/or sorting, filtering and analysis of <i>any</i> information/data by considering/determining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the constituent elements that form part of the problem and how best to then address them? • What patterns/similarities/shared characteristics are relevant/could be useful? • What relevant characteristics could/should be separated from irrelevant characteristics? 	<p>Below are examples of just a few situations where trainee accountants might be able to demonstrate this learning outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importing the client's trial balance into CaseWare (or other audit software) and determining the following sub-components to be identified and imported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lines that should not be imported – totals, items with no balances, etc. - Account numbers (making sure format agrees to PY) - Account descriptions - Balance to import – whether current year or prior year, debit or credit, etc. • Preparing a population prior to extracting a monetary unit sample: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - do transactions share the same characteristics - is there any need to stratify the population prior to selection - is there any need to exclude any transactions (tested elsewhere or not relevant to the objective of the test) • Converting the general ledger received from the client to a more user-friendly format where users can navigate it through filters or pivot tables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Format of account numbers – how many characters, etc. - Fields required (e.g., account number, account name, date, transaction number, description, amount, etc.) - Contra entries to be excluded or included - Any amalgamations required to suit reporting formats • Searching/filtering for unusual journal entries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differentiating between week days, weekends, and public holidays - Format of journal numbers - Users who are authorized to process journals as well as those not authorized to process journals. • Filtering for all debtors that exceed credit terms. • When evaluating a company's inventory controls, the trainee accountant might need to determine relevant characteristics of the inventory items and discard irrelevant characteristics. For example, the trainee accountant might need to identify inventory items that are most likely to be stolen or misappropriated, based on factors such as value, size, or ease of concealment. In contrast, characteristics such as colour or brand might be irrelevant to assessing the risk of inventory theft. By determining the relevant characteristics and discarding the irrelevant characteristics, the trainee accountant can focus the audit procedures on the areas of highest risk and maximize the efficiency of the audit. • When analysing a company's payroll data, the trainee accountant might need to determine relevant characteristics of the employees and discard irrelevant characteristics. For example, the trainee accountant might need to identify employees who are most likely to be paid inappropriately, based on factors such as job title, salary level, or hours worked. In contrast, characteristics such as gender or age might be irrelevant to identifying payroll irregularities. By determining the relevant characteristics and discarding the irrelevant characteristics, trainee accountant can focus the audit procedures on the areas of highest risk and reduce the risk of bias or discrimination. 	<p>Depending on the rotation, trainee accountants could demonstrate this learning outcome in a variety of ways such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracting financial reporting data from the system and searching/filtering for specific information such as debtors that exceed credit terms. • Reconciling detailed information to trial balances, valuation reports and actuarial models. • When evaluating a company's inventory controls, the trainee accountant might need to determine relevant characteristics of the inventory items and discard irrelevant characteristics. For example, the trainee accountant might need to identify inventory items that are most likely to be stolen or misappropriated, based on factors such as value, size, or ease of concealment. In contrast, characteristics such as colour or brand might be irrelevant to assessing the risk of inventory theft. • When analysing a company's payroll data, the trainee accountant might need to determine relevant characteristics of the employees and discard irrelevant characteristics. For example, the trainee accountant might need to identify employees who are most likely to be paid inappropriately, based on factors such as job title, salary level, or hours worked. In contrast, characteristics such as gender or age might be irrelevant to identifying payroll irregularities.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W1 Computational thinking: <i>Computational thinking is a set of problem-solving methods that involve expressing problems and their solutions in ways that a computer could also execute.</i>		
(b) Write an algorithm to solve a problem, using any programming language (such as Microsoft VBA, Python) OR evaluate the appropriateness of a presented algorithm to solve a problem.		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>In mathematics and computer science, an algorithm is a finite sequence of well-defined instructions, typically used to solve a class of specific problems or to perform a computation.</p> <p>The algorithm should be appropriate in the circumstances and should actually solve a problem. Therefore, trainee accountants must be able to demonstrate that they understand what they are trying to achieve with the algorithm, and what value or impact it has on the desired procedure.</p> <p>It is important to note that trainee accountants have 2 options here to demonstrate this learning outcome:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They can write an algorithm themselves <u>OR</u> 2. They can evaluate an existing algorithm that someone else has written / designed. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">If taking this 2nd option, the trainee accountant would need to clearly define the algorithm and then provide an evaluation of the degree to which they believe it addresses a defined problem.</p> <p>Please note that this learning outcome is not the same as W6c) "Use spreadsheet software in an accounting/business context (e.g., working papers; data analytics using advanced techniques, and knowledge of effective utilization (including short cut keys, macros, pivot tables and other advanced excel functions)" and using the advanced functions in Excel does not show that you can write an algorithm. Excel is a spreadsheet software used for data analysis and calculations, while VBA is a programming language used to extend Excel's functionality and automate tasks. The reference to Microsoft VBA indicates that you could use this programming language to write the basic code to automate a procedure or solve a problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainee accountants are not limited to Python or Microsoft VBA. Any programming language can be considered in addressing this learning outcome and the most appropriate one would depend on the action that is required, for example, HTML to update the basic structure and content of a webpage or SQL to process information from a database. 	<p>Trainee accountants could use Microsoft VBA to write an algorithm to eliminate or select data with a specific characteristic (e.g., date ranges, rand amounts, locations, reference numbers etc.) and use the specific data selected to then perform a procedure.</p> <p>Note that this is not the same as simply applying a filter in Excel or using a predefined function.</p> <p>Examples of scenarios where algorithms could be used (or where existing algorithms to do these things could be evaluated) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extracting specific information from a population for further testing (such as monetary unit or systematic sampling selections). • Identifying outliers within a population (items falling outside of predetermined ranges or field characteristics) as potential risks (such as the analysis of journal entries for those that present unusual characteristics). • Automating the formatting the general ledger data of clients in order for them and the rest of the team to be able to filter/search the information as needed. • Automating calculations that use standard inputs. • Note that utilising certain Excel functions such as "IF THEN" may provide trainee accountants with the ability to write algorithms because these require trainee accountants to effectively populate the functions with a set of instructions to achieve a desired result. 	<p>Trainee accountants could use Microsoft VBA to write an algorithm to eliminate or select data with a specific characteristic (e.g., date ranges, rand amounts, locations, reference numbers etc.) and use the specific data selected to then perform a procedure.</p> <p>Note that this is not the same as simply applying a filter in Excel or using a predefined function.</p> <p>Examples of scenarios where algorithms could be used (or where existing algorithms to do these things could be evaluated) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying outliers within a population (items falling outside of predetermined ranges or field characteristics) as potential risks (such as the analysis of journal entries for those that present unusual characteristics). • Automating the formatting the general ledger data. • Automating calculations that use standard inputs. • Organising data • Finding specific information within a dataset. • Trainee accountants could use SQL coding to pull data from the system for financial reporting purposes.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
<p>W2 Data knowledge and strategy: <i>Understanding the types of financial and non-financial information available within an entity, identifying possible relationships between data sets, requesting the required data (including normalisation (clean-up) thereof), understanding the security and privacy risks associated with the use, storage and transfer of data, and understanding the importance of the implementation of sufficient data protection policies and controls. Advanced data management should be performed by expert data scientists and/or IT experts</i></p>		
(a) Evaluate data strategies or policies that deal with data protection, privacy, intellectual property rights, legal and regulatory requirements, AND/OR ethical issues in data management, data storage, or data transfer.		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>An entity's data strategy should ensure that data is treated as an asset and that data resources can be used, shared and transferred easily, efficiently, safely, and consistently across multiple projects or applications, as required.</p> <p>A data strategy should establish common methods, practices, and processes to manage, manipulate and share data across the entity in a consistent way.</p> <p>This should include establishing and implementing controls, policies and procedures to identify, assess and address risks associated with the transfer of data. Data transferred from one location to another can include automated transfers of data (uploading information from one computer to another location, for example) and manual transfers (via devices like flash drives, for example).</p> <p>Data strategy should ensure compliance with relevant data privacy legislation such as GDPR and POPIA and should ensure that data is used in an ethical manner, respecting the rights of individuals and organisations to privacy.</p> <p>Trainee accountants would need to first establish how a company manages, stores and transfers its data and would then need to evaluate the extent to which these strategies / policies adequately address aspects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection (unauthorised access) • Privacy (unauthorised access to personal or private data of individuals) • Regulation / legislation (such as POPIA or GDPR requirements, where applicable) • Intellectual property rights (such as patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets.) • Ethics (use of data for the right purposes, respecting the rights of stakeholders to that data) 	<p>The Auditing Standards require that auditors obtain an understanding of the entity's information processing activities, including its data and information, the resources to be used in such activities and the policies that define, for significant classes of transactions, account balances and disclosures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How information flows through the entity's information system; • The accounting records, specific accounts in the financial statements and other supporting records relating to the flows of information in the information system; • The financial reporting process used to prepare the entity's financial statements, including disclosures; and • The entity's resources, including the IT environment, relevant to the above. <p>Trainee accountants are thus likely to be able to obtain the necessary understanding of a client's data strategies or policies when obtaining this understanding during the planning process.</p> <p>Further guidance around IT exists in the Auditing Standards.</p> <p>When evaluating these strategies or policies, trainee accountants should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain an understanding of the type and nature of data being transferred, processed and stored by an entity. • Consider aspects such as the nature of the information, how sensitive the information is, where it is being stored and how secure that location is, and whether there are any legal responsibilities associated with that information (such as POPIA for example). • Evaluate the degree to which policies mitigate risks such as unauthorised access to that data / unauthorised viewing of information (especially sensitive or confidential information); protection of confidential information; non-compliance with legal requirements around the storage and use of certain information (e.g., POPIA / GDPR requirements); loss of / unauthorised deletion of / changes to / corruption of the data; theft of data; or hardware/software failure. <p>In evaluating these strategies or policies, trainee accountants should consider the degree to which the entity has adequate controls in place to address identified risks associated with the processing and storage of data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of controls that they might expect to find incorporated into policies could include unique usernames and passwords; making use of tables of user rights; making use of OTPs and other security measures; physical access controls to data storage locations; system logs and notification reports; adequate back-up protocols; appropriate anti-virus/firewalls; appropriate encryption of software and files where necessary; or validation checks reconciling sent information to received information. 	<p>In any situation where data is transferred, trainee accountants would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain an understanding of the type and nature of data being transferred, processed and stored by an entity. • Consider aspects such as the nature of the information, how sensitive the information is, where it is being stored and how secure that location is, and whether there are any legal responsibilities associated with that information (such as POPIA for example). • Evaluate the degree to which policies mitigate risks such as unauthorised access to that data / unauthorised viewing of information (especially sensitive or confidential information); protection of confidential information; non-compliance with legal requirements around the storage and use of certain information (e.g., POPIA / GDPR requirements); loss of / unauthorised deletion of / changes to / corruption of the data; theft of data; or hardware/software failure. <p>In evaluating these strategies or policies, trainee accountants should consider the degree to which the entity has adequate controls in place to address identified risks associated with the processing and storage of data.</p> <p>Examples of controls that they might expect to find incorporated into policies could include unique usernames and passwords; making use of tables of user rights; making use of OTPs and other security measures; physical access controls to data storage locations; system logs and notification reports; adequate back-up protocols; appropriate anti-virus/firewalls; appropriate encryption of software and files where necessary; or validation checks reconciling sent information to received information.</p> <p>Trainee accountants may develop data retention policies, implement encryption protocols, and conduct privacy impact assessments to safeguard sensitive information and mitigate ethical risks associated with data handling.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
<p>W3 Data analytics: <i>Performing basic data modelling or where necessary requesting advanced data modelling by experts, and then interpreting the results, concluding and reporting/presenting/communicating as applicable. The W2 competency comprises both a technical computer skill and the ability to apply the underlying technical competency</i></p>		
(a) Use processes of inspection, extraction, transformation, loading, modelling, and interpreting data (through the use of data analytic software tools such as ACL, IDEA, PowerBI, or advanced Excel™ functions) to solve a defined business or audit problem		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>With the world becoming more data intensive, a key skill is the ability of the trainee accountants to be able to make sense of large volumes of data.</p> <p>It is important to remember that the purpose of data analysis and data modelling is to find solutions to challenges experienced that assist in the decision-making process. Therefore, once trainee accountants have completed the analysis and fully understood the problem/challenge being faced, the next logical step would be to interpret and/or evaluate the results of the analysis to solve a defined business or engagement problem and suggest and/or evaluate further steps to be taken. The "defined business or audit problem" should be clear from the evidence provided in the LOR.</p> <p>Data inspection is the act of closely (carefully or critically) examining data, documents or systems and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the elements of a specific business process by documenting the workflow; • Defining the problem to be solved and determining clear measurement priorities; • Identification of data sources appropriate to solving the defined problem, and • Understanding the nature, distribution and limitations of the identified data, and that of the population to be tested. <p>Extraction is the process of selectively retrieving specific data or information from a larger source or dataset and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of inherent complexities of data extraction (e.g., compatibility of systems; using multiple sources; validity of source data; legal and regulatory challenges, and other process inhibitors); • Extraction of the required data from the identified data sources; and • Coordination of the use of technology and platforms to enhance extraction of relevant information and data. <p>Transformation is the process of changing, converting, or structuring data from its original format into a new format that is more suitable for analysis, reporting, or other specific purposes and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of the effort (time and resources) needed to transform and prepare data for analysis by considering standardization of fields and records; de-duplication of records; and verification of anomalies; and • Sorting data into logical order and data types such as text, numbers, alphanumeric form, video, or audio. <p>Loading is the process of transferring or importing prepared data from various sources into a data storage system, such as a database or data warehouse and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of storage and processing capabilities for the purpose of loading a full dataset; and • Using statistical modelling techniques to reduce the data set down to a valid, yet manageable size. <p>Once these phases have been completed, modelling (the process of creating mathematical or computational representations of real-world situations based on data) can be done using the appropriate software tools.</p>	<p>Data modelling can be applied in various aspects of a business. It could be as simple as a forecast production volume module, to an expected credit loss module, to an impairment assessment or valuation (note the possible ability to demonstrate this learning outcome while auditing accounting estimates).</p> <p>Examples of where trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they use data analytic tools include when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing substantive tests of detail to generate exception reports highlighting outliers in populations. • Performing CAATs for any audit purposes where the use of these CAATs incorporates an analysis of data, e.g., Excel Filters and Pivot tables, ACL, IDEA etc. • Developing expectations for predictive analytical reviews through extracting relevant data to then model expectations. • Performing preliminary analytical review procedures to analyse ratios, relationships, and trends. <p>Regardless of the model being built, the five phases referred to in the learning outcome description would be relevant in all scenarios of data modelling. Trainee accountants would need to demonstrate their understanding of each of the five steps and <i>how</i> they addressed them</p> <p>When documenting evidence in the LORs, trainee accountants should ensure that it is evident that they are able to interpret and/or evaluate the results of the analysis to <i>solve</i> a defined business problem or engagement problem.</p> <p>For example: A trainee accountant could identify the need to determine the impairment value of inventory at hand and apply this acumen as follows:</p> <p>Inspection – inspecting the raw data entered into the client’s custom stock system to determine how the system processes the information to reach the end value that is displayed on the reports. This could include a walk-through of a transaction from start to finish to determine if reliance could be placed on the information.</p> <p>Extraction - understanding how the stock system works to determine how to extract the required information, including understanding in what format the information will, whether this is compatible with the firm software, if it's accurate from what the input was into the system etc.</p> <p>Transformation – understanding the reporting functionality of the client's stock system and transforming the underlying data into the format required.</p> <p>Loading – the report is downloaded in csv format so that it can be imported into the firm software/Excel and the downloaded data is inspected to confirm that all fields display correctly, the report is accurate, and reliance can be placed on the reports received.</p> <p>Modelling data – the data imported into Excel is used for sample selection and to enable the required tests to be performed. Use PowerBI to display graphs for the movement of inventory during the year together with industry norms.</p>	<p>Data modelling can be applied in various aspects of a business. It could be as simple as a forecast production volume module, to an expected credit loss module, to an impairment assessment or valuation (note the possible ability to demonstrate this learning outcome while auditing accounting estimates).</p> <p>Regardless of the model being built, the five phases referred to in the learning outcome description would be relevant in all scenarios of data modelling. Trainee accountants would need to demonstrate their understanding of each of the five steps and <i>how</i> they addressed them.</p> <p>When documenting evidence in the LORs, trainee accountants should ensure that it is evident that they are able to interpret and/or evaluate the results of the analysis to <i>solve</i> a defined business problem or engagement problem.</p> <p>For example: A trainee accountant could identify the need to determine the impairment value of inventory at hand and apply this acumen as follows:</p> <p>Inspection – inspecting the raw data entered into the organisations stock system to determine how the system processes the information to reach the end value that is displayed on the reports. This could include a walk-through of a transaction from start to finish to determine if reliance could be placed on the information.</p> <p>Extraction - understanding how the stock system works to determine how to extract the required information, including understanding in what format the information will, whether this is compatible with the firm software, if it's accurate from what the input was into the system etc.</p> <p>Transformation – understanding the reporting functionality of the stock system and transforming the underlying data into the format required.</p> <p>Loading – downloading the information in csv format for reporting purposes.</p> <p>Modelling data – use PowerBI to display graphs for the movement of inventory during the year together with industry norms.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W4 Automation: refers to the technology by which a process or procedure is performed with minimal human assistance		
(a) Identify opportunities to automate AND/OR modernise processes AND evaluate the benefits and risks associated with this.		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>PVA III 1(a) requires that trainee accountants “Demonstrate life-long learning by staying abreast of current trends and emerging issues including in relation to digital developments”.</p> <p>Trainee accountants need to appreciate the continuous development of technology and be alert to emerging technology that can be adopted within the firm or by clients of the firm to improve operations and align business processes to best and modern business practices.</p> <p>This learning outcome requires trainee accountants to be able to identify processes that <i>could</i> potentially be automated or modernized using technology. It is important to remember that trainee accountants need to then also be able to identify the benefits and risks associated with this.</p> <p>It is important to note here that trainee accountants do NOT need to implement or use automation technology in order to achieve proficiency in this learning outcome. The focus is on the ability to identify opportunities to implement or use automation and to evaluate the benefits and risks associated with automating/modernising the process.</p>	<p>There are many examples of processes that trainee accountants might identify as lending themselves to automation and modernisation such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud-based accounting solutions (e.g., Xero Accounting). • Automated Banking Applications. • Customised interfaces between external applications and the accounting software. • Automated updating of inventory/asset registers e.g., using Hand-held barcode scanners. • Biometric systems that generate payroll information based on attendance. • Cognitive computing (programming computers to emulate human thinking, making use of AI (artificial intelligence) and other underlying technologies such as machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing, or speech recognition). Examples of this could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Automated help bots on websites to deal with large volumes of customer enquiries. - Automated voice response systems to call centers or companies that rely on telephonic interactions with customers. <p>It is important for trainee accountants to include their evaluation (reasons for and against) in support of their decision about whether the identified possible automation could be useful or not in the specific circumstances.</p> <p>In doing this trainee accountants <u>should</u> consider benefits associated with the possible automation such as improved efficiency, cost-saving, reduced risk of error, or reduced risk of theft, for example.</p> <p>Trainee accountants <u>should</u> then also consider the risks associated with the identified possible automation such as unfamiliarity with complex systems, costs associated with training or upskilling staff, inappropriate implementation of these systems, increased complexity associated with tailoring or changing these systems, or increased reliance / dependence on systems that are outside the control of the organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, A trainee accountant may use CAATs to run audit procedures or use IDEA in Caseware to select samples. Benefit: Audits performed faster and frees up resources for other work. Risk: There may be glitches with data errors, overreliance on computer technology and reduced professional scepticism. 	<p>There are many examples of processes that trainee accountants might identify as lending themselves to automation and modernisation such as using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Machine learning, data-mining techniques for customer data (e.g. purchase trends, commonly purchased products etc.) to enhance the customer experience with a view of improving a service or product offering and customer experience (e.g. through suggested products, discounts announcements on commonly purchased products etc.). • Programming in the production process to use past data, current trends and industry best practices to solve production or service offering problems as well as improving the production/ service offered. • Tools such as Power BI, Excel (macros, VBA etc.) to automate routine tasks e.g. routine data collection, processing, creating a basic working paper or schedule, analysis, real time dashboards creation, etc. • Power Automate to enhance efficiency and productivity through automation of data collection, sharing, routine tasks alerts/reminders, etc. • Customer chat bots to attend to general customer queries on company websites, social media support lines etc. • Cloud-based accounting solutions. • Customised interfaces between external applications and the accounting software including automated banking applications. • Automated updating of inventory/asset registers e.g., using Hand-held barcode scanners. • Biometric systems that generate payroll information based on attendance. • Cognitive computing (programming computers to emulate human thinking, making use of AI (artificial intelligence) and other underlying technologies such as machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing, or speech recognition). Examples of this could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Automated help bots on websites to deal with large volumes of customer enquiries. - Automated voice response systems to call centers or companies that rely on telephonic interactions with customers. <p>It is important for trainee accountants to include their evaluation (reasons for and against) in support of their decision about whether the identified possible automation could be useful or not in the specific circumstances.</p> <p>In doing this trainee accountants <u>should</u> consider benefits associated with the possible automation such as improved efficiency, cost-saving, reduced risk of error, or reduced risk of theft, for example.</p> <p>Trainee accountants <u>should</u> then also consider the risks associated with the identified possible automation such as unfamiliarity with complex systems, costs associated with training or upskilling staff, inappropriate implementation of these systems, increased complexity associated with tailoring or changing these systems, or increased reliance / dependence on systems that are outside the control of the organisation.</p> <p>For example, As financial reporting becomes more data-driven, trainee accountants could consider how to automate/modernize processes to facilitate more efficient reporting.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W5 New developments and protocols (e.g., artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, Internet of Things etc.)		
(a) Identify opportunities to use new developments and protocols to address accounting and business problems, limitations, risks, etc.		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants must be able to identify opportunities to address accounting and business problems, limitations, or risks through the use of emerging technology. Limitations could include potential drawbacks or weaknesses associated with a particular technology or process. In the context of accounting and auditing, limitations might include the potential for errors or biases in data analysis algorithms, or the risk of data breaches or cyberattacks associated with cloud-based computing or other emerging technologies.</p> <p>Trainee accountants might have already done this in demonstrating W4(a) if emerging technology to automate or modernize has been identified.</p> <p>Like for W4(a), trainee accountants are expected to remain up to date with digital developments (refer PVA III1(a)) and this may enable them to identify opportunities for organisations they work with (or for) to consider the implementation of emerging technology.</p> <p>This learning outcome is then broader than W4(a) and extends to the possible use of any emerging technology to address a problem.</p> <p>New developments are emerging technologies or methodologies that have recently been developed and are not yet widely adopted or understood. Examples of new developments in the context of accounting and auditing might include blockchain, artificial intelligence, or robotic process automation.</p> <p>Protocols are a set of rules or guidelines that govern the way in which a particular technology or process is used. In the context of accounting and auditing, protocols might include standards for data security or internal controls, or procedures for conducting audit tests and evaluations.</p>	<p>Possible examples of recent new developments and protocols which could be considered by trainee accountants in addressing accounting and business problems, risks and limitations include the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected appliances. • Smart security systems. • Wearable health monitors to monitor employee well-being. • Smart factory equipment to reduce capturing errors. • Wireless trackers for inventory or PPE. • Biometric cybersecurity scanners to implement data and software security over accounting packages and data. • Blockchain in procurement processes and financial strategies to ensure immediate payments and procurement security. • Electrification of vehicle fleets. • Use of large language models such as Chat GPT to improve efficiency in data searches. 	<p>New developments and protocols could be considered by trainee accountants in addressing accounting and business problems, risks and limitations, including how data and information is managed and extracted, such as the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big data when making inputs to business plans, proposed solutions and business strategies to ensure meaningful and relevant data is used in the strategic direction of the business. • Smart contracts with key business partners in the supply chain management process to ensure minimal human intervention and reduce turnaround times. • Programme interfaces and internet of things in the business operations to enhance data integrity. • Data integration tools such as data federation to combine information from multiple sources into one (e.g. information from CIPC, SARS, Stock exchange markets etc.) to enhance accurate information processing. • Connected appliances. • Smart security systems. • Wearable health monitors to monitor employee well-being. • Smart factory equipment to reduce capturing errors. • Wireless trackers for inventory or PPE. • Biometric cybersecurity scanners to implement data and software security over accounting packages and data. • Blockchain in procurement processes and financial strategies to ensure immediate payments and procurement security. • Electrification of vehicle fleets. • Use of large language models such as Chat GPT to improve efficiency in data searches.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W6 User competencies: <i>Use technology ethically as an enabler to optimise decision making and to promote business efficiencies and controls.</i>		
(a) Apply word processing software skills in a manner relevant to an accounting/business context, to enhance communication (e.g., letters, memorandums, reports, working papers, and other written correspondence), so as to meet all legal, ethical, regulatory and business requirements.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants must be able to use applicable software applications (Word, Pages, Adobe InDesign, etc.) to prepare formal documents and/ or correspondence.</p> <p>Whilst doing this, trainee accountants must be able to apply the necessary legal, compliance, regulatory etc. frameworks to these documents so that they meet the required standards.</p> <p>Trainee accountants must have the ability to also focus on the presentation of these documents and/ or reports to ensure that they are presented in a professional manner that is easily understandable.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used word processing software applications to prepare working papers that are neat, logical and well-structured to present information in a manner that is easily reviewed and meets the appropriate quality requirements of the firm. • Used word processing software applications to prepare an audit completion report and Report to those charged with governance (ISA 265), and ensure the reports comply with the requirements of ISA 265. • Prepared engagement letters and/or representation letters and ensure the letter complies with the legal and regulatory framework. • Prepared any other type of structured business-related document and/ or report, e.g.: memorandums, minutes, proposals, engagement reports, formal research documents, etc. 	<p>Trainee accountants could use software such as MS Word in a variety of ways, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when contributing to Annual reports. • Drafting working papers during an internal audit rotation. • Preparing regulatory reports. • Preparing legal documentation. • Any other type of structured business-related document and/ or report, e.g.: memorandums, minutes, proposals, formal research documents, etc. <p>In preparing documents, trainee accountants will need to take into consideration legal, ethical, regulatory and business requirements, depending on the purpose of the report and the audience.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W6 User competencies: <i>Use technology ethically as an enabler to optimise decision making and to promote business efficiencies and controls.</i>		
(b) Apply visualisation techniques and tools (e.g., dashboards or presentation software) in an accounting/business context		Required proficiency: 2
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This learning outcome requires that trainee accountants must be able to apply visualisation techniques and tools. This requires that they are able to present information in a visual format that makes it more digestible or more easily understood.</p> <p>Examples of these techniques and tools include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of dashboards (which incorporate the use of visuals such as graphs or charts that automatically change when information affecting them is changed) or • The use of presentation software application programmes like Microsoft PowerPoint or Apple Keynote to prepare business related presentations or present information. <p>These are both examples. It is important to note that trainee accountants are not restricted to either of these applications and if they can find other ways to use visualisation techniques to present information, this would be perfectly acceptable.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified the correct and appropriate data from a data set and presented that information within a dashboard or information summary document; • Took information and used the information to present infographic type visualisations that represented the original data set (such as changes in employee demographics over time in an integrated report, for example); • Effectively used contrast of colours to highlight important information within a data set (e.g., using yellow on black or blue) – the use of conditional formatting within MS Excel, for example; • Built a Dashboard using Excel/ Powerbase to extract and present key drivers such as sales, stock levels, breakages, average delivery time, number of deliveries, etc.; or • Prepared a business-related presentation using presentation software (PowerPoint, Keynote etc.) and met the business requirements for the presentation. Output can include training presentations, proposals, business reports to management, thought leadership presentations and corporate/ marketing related presentations. <p>Within a training office context, trainee accountants might be formally provided with opportunities to demonstrate their use of presentation software in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of ratio analyses to client incorporating charts, graphs and tables to present data visually. • Presentation of budgets and forecasts using line graphs or bar charts to aid in conveying complex information. • Create interactive presentations to educate colleagues on financial concepts, accounting processes, or software usage. Incorporate quizzes, simulations, and real-life examples to enhance learning and retention. • Deliver a short presentation (using presentation software) to a new intake of trainee accountants on a selection of topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What advice would I give to new trainee accountants? - How did I successfully adapt to the work environment? - What tips and techniques would new trainee accountants appreciate? • Following any internal training session on public speaking, trainee accountants might need to prepare and then present on a topic using presentation software. • Trainee accountants need to remain alert to other possible situations where they need to present information to a group and where the use of presentation software might be appropriate. 	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified the correct and appropriate data from a data set and presented that information within a dashboard or information summary document. • Took information and used the information to present infographic type visualisations that represented the original data set (such as changes in employee demographics over time in an integrated report, for example). • Effectively used contrast of colours to highlight important information within a data set (e.g., using yellow on black or blue) – for example, using conditional formatting within MS Excel. • Built a Dashboard using Excel/ Powerbase to extract and present key drivers such as sales, stock levels, breakages, average delivery time, number of deliveries, etc. • Prepared a business-related presentation using presentation software (PowerPoint, Keynote etc.) and met the business requirements for the presentation. Output can include training presentations, business cases, business report, thought leadership presentations and corporate/ marketing related presentations. • Presentation of ratio analyses to incorporating charts, graphs and tables to present data visually. • Presentation of budgets and forecasts using line graphs or bar charts to aid in conveying complex information. • Create interactive presentations to educate colleagues on financial concepts, accounting processes, or software usage. Incorporate quizzes, simulations, and real-life examples to enhance learning and retention. • Deliver a short presentation (using presentation software) to a new intake of trainee accountants on a selection of topics such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What advice would I give to new trainee accountants? - How did I successfully adapt to the work environment? - What tips and techniques would new trainee accountants appreciate? <p>Trainee accountants need to remain alert to other possible situations where they need to present information to a group and where the use of presentation software might be appropriate.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W6 User competencies: <i>Use technology ethically as an enabler to optimise decision making and to promote business efficiencies and controls.</i>		
(c) Use spreadsheet software in an accounting/business context (e.g., working papers; data analytics using advanced techniques, and knowledge of effective utilization (including short cut keys, macros, pivot tables and other advanced excel functions)).		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
Trainee accountants must be able to use spreadsheet application software like Microsoft Excel or Apple Numbers within the accounting/ business context of their day-to-day work by incorporating various advanced/more complex application tools like short-cuts, macros, pivot tables, VLOOKUP, HLOOKUP, XLOOKUP etc.	Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use spreadsheet application software to prepare engagement working papers documenting audit findings. • Use functions and formulae in the spreadsheet software to be more efficient in presenting data. • Use macros to create spreadsheet data worksheets. • Use tables and pivot tables to present and dissect data to make it more understandable. • Preparing management accounts, Fixed Asset Registers, AFS, amortisation schedules, tax calculations, ratio analysis, building standard templates, etc. • Create financial models and perform calculations. • Develop budgets, compare actual and projected figures. • It should be noted that to demonstrate level 3 proficiency in this outcome, trainee accountants will need to display an ability to use some of the more complex features / functions available within the spreadsheet software such as mentioned above. 	Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing management accounts, Fixed Asset Registers, AFS, amortisation schedules, tax calculations, ratio analysis, building standard templates, etc. • Create financial models and perform calculations. • Develop budgets, compare actual and projected figures. • Use spreadsheet application software to prepare working papers documenting audit findings. • Use functions and formulae in the spreadsheet software to be more efficient in presenting data. • Use macros to create spreadsheet data worksheets. • Use tables and pivot tables to present and dissect data to make it more understandable. It should be noted that to demonstrate level 3 proficiency in this outcome, trainee accountants will need to display an ability to use some of the more complex features / functions available within the spreadsheet software such as mentioned above.

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W6 User competencies: <i>Use technology ethically as an enabler to optimise decision making and to promote business efficiencies and controls.</i>		
(d) Communicate and collaborate with others using a wide range of digital devices, technologies and platforms.		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>Trainee accountants must be able to use various digital platforms to collaborate with others when communicating, in meetings, during project management, or when file sharing for example.</p> <p>Devices, technologies and platforms could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phones, tablets, or computers; • Email; • Text-based chats; • Social media; • On-line learning/ meeting platforms (such as MS Teams, Google Meet or Zoom); or • Communication software such as MS SharePoint, Adobe, or Dropbox. • Project management and productivity platforms such as Trello or Slack. <p>Trainee accountants should note that they are required to demonstrate proficiency across a wide range of devices, technologies and platforms. Evidence must therefore be presented that covers a suitable range and should not be limited to just one or two forms of communication using just one or two platforms on just one or two devices, for example. One item of evidence can however cover a single device, technology or platform with cumulative evidence reflecting the variety.</p>	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they communicated in many different ways such as how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made use of email applications such as Gmail or MS Outlook to communicate clearly with others. • Made use of social media platforms or applications (such as WhatsApp or Instagram) to share ideas or communicate with colleagues. • Made use of online meeting software application programmes like GoTo Meeting, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, Webex, U Meeting etc. to hold or participate effectively in online virtual meetings, and / or training sessions. • Made use of more advanced meeting functions. e.g., polls, break-out rooms etc. to ensure the best engagement and user retention of information. • Used online project management software to manage and collaborate on projects, e.g., applications like Microsoft Project/ Planner, Teamwork, Basecamp, ProofHub, Zoho Projects, Trello, Slack etc. • Share information using file-sharing software such as SharePoint, Adobe or DropBox. 	<p>Trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they communicate in many different ways such as how they use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email applications such as Gmail or MS Outlook to communicate clearly with others. • Social media platforms or applications (such as WhatsApp or Instagram) to share ideas or communicate with colleagues. • Online meeting software application programmes like GoTo Meeting, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, Webex, U Meeting etc. to hold or participate effectively in online virtual meetings, and / or training sessions. • Advanced meeting functions. e.g., polls, break-out rooms etc. to ensure the best engagement and user retention of information. • Online project management software to manage and collaborate on projects, e.g., applications like Microsoft Project/ Planner, Teamwork, Basecamp, ProofHub, Zoho Projects, Trello, Slack etc. <p>File-sharing software such as SharePoint, Adobe or DropBox to share information.</p>

The Professional Values, Attitudes, and Acumens in practice

W: DIGITAL ACUMEN		
W6 User competencies: <i>Use technology ethically as an enabler to optimise decision making and to promote business efficiencies and controls.</i>		
(e) Apply cybersecurity processes, tools AND/OR techniques to secure and safeguard information technology resources such as organisational IT infrastructure, laptops (and other portable devices), software, cloud (and other) storage, AND/OR data		Required proficiency: 3
What could this look like in practice?	What kinds of evidence could a trainee provide?	
	Training through client engagements	Training through rotations
<p>This learning outcome relates to the protection and preservation of the organisation's information technology assets through measures that prevent harm, loss or unauthorised access. It relates to creating a secure environment to prevent risks from materialising, including implementation of precautions, protocols and practices. It includes measures to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data and systems. However, the focus of this learning outcome is on user-level cyber security rather than organisational level cyber security (which is highly specialised and not required of a professional accountant) and so trainee accountants should focus on what they are doing in their personal capacities using their personal devices (e.g. computers, notebooks, tablets, or phones) to minimise cyber risk.</p> <p>Trainee accountants must be able to identify cyber risks associated with their personal use of technology and apply appropriate processes, tools and techniques to mitigate those risks.</p> <p>Trainee accountants must be able to incorporate the appropriate measures to safeguard IT resources and data as part of their day-to-day work.</p>	<p>To demonstrate this learning outcome, trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made use of anti-virus and/or firewall software by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the anti-virus/firewall software on their laptop is updated (it happens automatically, but it may happen that trainee accountants get a notice that it didn't want to update and then they need to take steps to ensure it is updated). - Scanning removable storage devices for viruses/threats. • Complied with standard office IT policies and procedures, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By backing-up of data on their laptops (including smart sync for CaseWare files). - By ensuring that personal data of clients or colleagues is not placed on public sites, shared with others that should not have access to it, etc. (POPI). - By not opening emails/messages from unknown senders and alerting their IT department where they are suspicious of incoming emails. - When utilising data transfer software (e.g., Dropbox, CaseWare Cloud, TeamViewer) and cloud computing and applying safeguards appropriate to the situation in order to safeguard IT resources and information. - By changing passwords when required to do so, not sharing passwords with others, etc. - By securing IT infrastructure in circumstances where this is not automatically done by internal controls etc. (e.g., safeguarding of laptop and data devices when working at a client/remotely). - By only using approved resources and software on their laptops. • Have appropriate security controls in place for sharing data with third parties on storage devices – e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deleting information from other clients / re-formatting the flash drive before using it to share information with a client/colleague/friend/family member/etc. - Scanning removable storage devices for viruses/threats – own devices received back from clients/colleagues/friends/family members/etc. or devices belonging to clients/colleagues/friends/family members/etc. - Securing and safeguarding storage devices and information on it by, for example, not letting it lie around for others to take/access, password protecting it, etc. • Securing and safeguarding information by password protecting spread sheets, changing passwords regularly, keeping computer screens locked when not working on it, keeping anti-virus and spyware up to date, reporting and deleting phishing emails and only accessing secure websites. 	<p>To demonstrate this learning outcome, trainee accountants could provide evidence of how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use anti-virus and/or firewall software by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the anti-virus/firewall software on their laptop is updated (it happens automatically, but it may happen that trainee accountants get a notice that it didn't want to update and then they need to take steps to ensure it is updated). - Scanning removable storage devices for viruses/threats. • Comply with the organisations IT policies and procedures, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By backing-up of data on their laptops (including smart sync for CaseWare files). - By ensuring that personal data of clients or colleagues is not placed on public sites, shared with others that should not have access to it, etc. (POPI). - By not opening emails/messages from unknown senders and alerting their IT department where they are suspicious of incoming emails. - When utilising data transfer software (e.g., Dropbox, CaseWare Cloud, TeamViewer) and cloud computing and applying safeguards appropriate to the situation in order to safeguard IT resources and information. - By changing passwords when required to do so, not sharing passwords with others, etc. - By securing IT infrastructure in circumstances where this is not automatically done by internal controls etc. (e.g., safeguarding of laptop and data devices when working at a client/remotely). - By only using approved resources and software on their laptops. • Have appropriate security controls in place for sharing data with third parties on storage devices – e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deleting information from other clients / re-formatting the flash drive before using it to share information with a client/colleague/friend/family member/etc. - Scanning removable storage devices for viruses/threats – own devices received back from clients/colleagues/friends/family members/etc. or devices belonging to clients/colleagues/friends/family members/etc. - Securing and safeguarding storage devices and information on it by, for example, not letting it lie around for others to take/access, password protecting it, etc. <p>Securing and safeguarding information by password protecting spread sheets, changing passwords regularly, keeping computer screens locked when not working on it, keeping anti-virus and spyware up to date, reporting and deleting phishing emails and only accessing secure websites.</p>