

Committee for Review of Education and Training

As stated in earlier write-ups, the goal of accounting education and practical experience is to produce competent professional accountants capable of making a positive contribution over their lifetimes to the profession and society in which they work. The Committee for Review of Education and Training (CRET) has been conscious of the fact that the education and practical experience of professional accountants should provide a foundation of professional knowledge, professional skills, and professional values, ethics and attitudes that enable them to continue to learn and adapt to change throughout their professional lives. These capabilities will enable professional accountants to identify problems, know what knowledge is required to solve problems, know where to find this knowledge and know how to apply it in an ethical manner to achieve appropriate solutions. The balance of these elements may vary but what is required is to develop the knowledge base and strong skills in order to produce competent professional accountants with appropriate values, ethics and attitudes. The Committee also recognizes that professional accountants need a broad global outlook to understand the context in which business and other organizations operate because the world is moving toward global market economic structure.

In accordance with the requirement of International Education

Standard (IES) 1, Entry Requirements to a Program of Professional Accounting Education, the entry requirement should be prescribed in such a manner so as to ensure that students hoping to become professional accountants have an educational background that enables them to have a reasonable possibility of achieving success in their studies, qualifying examinations and practical experience period.

The IES 1 also contemplates that “whichever route is chosen, the entry requirements adopted should fit together consistently with the overall program of professional accounting education laid down by the professional body concerned. It is important that candidates from all possible educational routes, whether starting from secondary, further or higher education, achieve a comparable level of professional competence at the point of qualification.”

It is in this context, and having regard several members, students and other stakeholders responses on the efficacy or otherwise of the scheme of education and training, the Committee decided to share some specific issues listed hereunder so as to get the views from larger number of stakeholders:

Entry Requirements

1. Whether in your opinion, the present scheme of allowing students to commence practical training

only after qualifying in PE (Examination II) is appropriate? If “No”, do you consider whether 10+2 examination or equivalent be treated as the minimum entry requirement followed by a common proficiency test to be eligible to commence practical training?

Compulsory Practical Training in Computers

2. Are you of the opinion that recently introduced compulsory practical training in computers is useful and relevant and should continue?
3. Do you suggest whether practical training in computers be imparted alongwith the Articles, say, during the first year of practical training?

Practical Training

4. Do you agree whether present duration of practical training of three years is appropriate?
5. Do you opine that the duration of practical training should be different for students entering the course after 10+2 examination (say, three and a half years or four years) and those who join after Graduation (say, three years)?
6. Do you consider industrial Training should be compulsory?
7. (a) Do you agree that the present system of allowing members to train articled clerks based on the number of years of practice is appropriate?

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- (b) Alternatively, would you suggest that the entitlement to train articled clerks should be based on factors like quantum of work, facilities available for training, etc.
8. Do you consider whether practical training should be imparted only by such firms of chartered accountants, which are accredited by the Institute as "Approved Training Organizations"?
9. Do you approve of the system of filing practical training reports by the Principal either on half-yearly basis or yearly basis, followed by a review to assess the adequacy of work-experience?

Theoretical Education and Examination

10. (a) Do you consider whether compulsory class-room education by the Institute in addition to supply of study material is essential to produce well-rounded competent professionals?

- (b) Do you suggest that for the purpose, the Institute should also establish Schools of Accountancy at important places in the country?
11. (a) Do you consider whether it would be appropriate to introduce some kind of "Accounting Technicians" course to tackle the backlog problem on account of large number of failures?
- (b) If "Yes", would you suggest *modus operandi* in respect of such persons as far as their relationship with the Institute is concerned?

General Management and Communication Skills (GMCS)

12. (a) What should be the appropriate duration of such a course to make it more relevant and meaningful?
- (b) Whether in your opinion, it would be proper to conduct such course after completion of Practical Training, say, during

the last year of training?

Specialisation

13. Do you consider that specialisation after the chartered accountancy course is appropriate having regard to long-term objectives of the chartered accountancy course?
14. What is your general assessment of the Post-Qualification Courses of the Institute?

Note: *The Issues identified above are illustrative only. Respondents are encouraged to suggest other alternatives alongwith reasons for the Committee's consideration.*

In case you need any clarification or wish to obtain further information, you are welcome to send a mail to Mr. Vijay Kapur, Secretary, Committee for Review of Education and Training at cret@icai.org or vijaykapur@icai.org.

COMPENDIUM OF OPINIONS – VOLUME XXIII (February 2003 – January 2004)

The Expert Advisory Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India has published Compendium of Opinions, Volume XXIII, containing opinions finalised by the Expert Advisory Committee during the period February 2003 to January 2004. The subjects of the opinions contained in this volume include:

- Segment reporting
- Deferred taxation
- Borrowing costs
- Cash discounts
- Reserves arising on amalgamation

This volume also contains a comprehensive index of ALL the opinions contained in ALL the VOLUMES OF THE COMPENDIUM OF OPINIONS. The opinions are based on the facts and circumstances of each case as presented to the Committee, and the accounting/auditing principles and practices and relevant laws applicable on the dates the Committee finalised the respective opinions.

Price : Rs. 150/-

Postal Charges: Rs. 19/- (plus Rs. 17/- if required by registered parcel)

Available at : Sale counters of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India at New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Kanpur.

