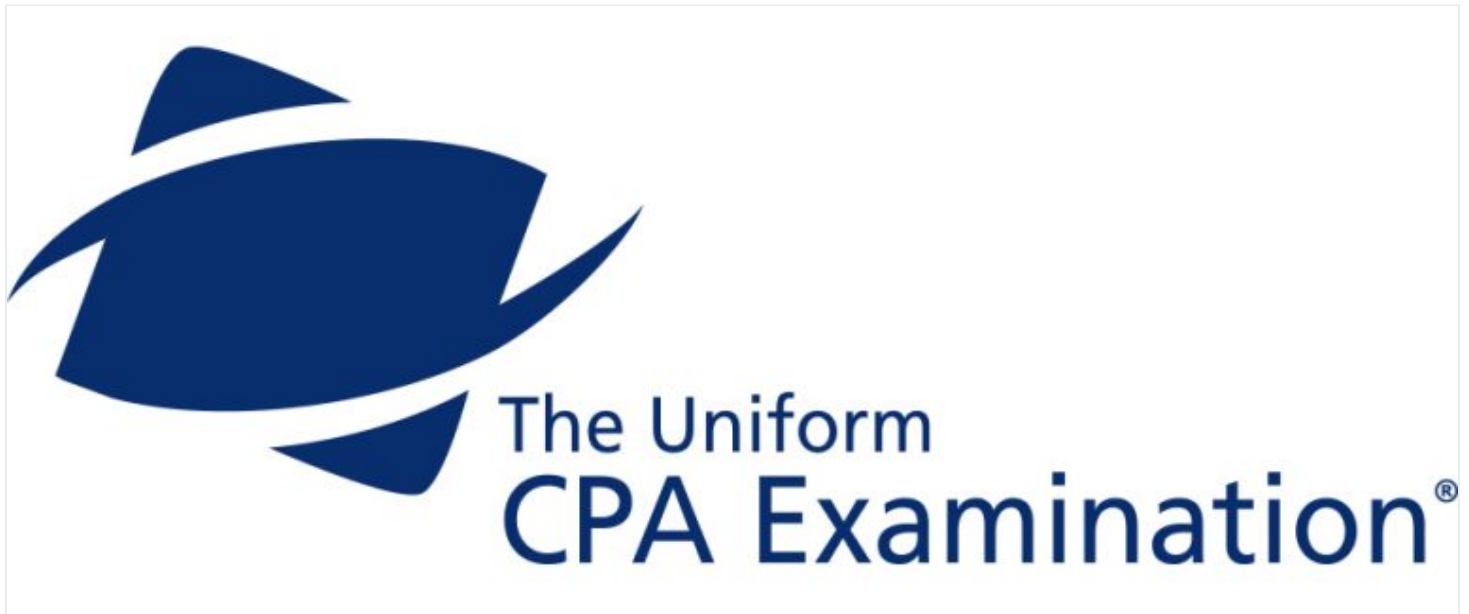


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problem solving and analytical ability. The Exam also makes greater use of task-based ...

Apr. 12, 2017



The [American Institute of CPAs](#) (AICPA), National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and professional testing company Prometric have released the latest revised version of the Uniform CPA Examination.

The next generation Exam, which began testing on April 1, has added additional assessment of higher-order cognitive skills that test a candidate's critical thinking, problem solving and analytical ability. The Exam also makes greater use of task-based simulations (TBSs) as a means of assessing these higher-order skills. Recent research confirms that CPAs are now performing tasks that rely upon these skills earlier in their careers.

“The roles and responsibilities of newly licensed CPAs are constantly evolving, so it's crucial for the CPA Exam to stay ahead of the curve. The CPA Exam now better reflects the knowledge and skills essential to today's profession,” said [Michael](#)

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“The new Exam Blueprints demonstrate the continuous enhancement model of the Uniform CPA Examination,” said Colleen Conrad, CPA, NASBA executive vice president and chief operating officer. This strengthens the public protection role of Boards of Accountancy by enhancing the examination portion of the licensing model (education, examination and experience) used to regulate more than 700,000 licensees throughout the U.S.,” she continued.

Among the most important changes to the CPA Exam:

- **Exam Blueprints** containing approximately 600 representative tasks across all four Exam sections are available on the AICPA website. The blueprints have replaced the Content Specification Outline (CSO) and Skill Specification Outline (SSO) as CPA candidates’ primary source of the content and skills that they will be tested on. These blueprints are more robust than the CSO and SSO, identifying content knowledge linked directly to representative tasks performed by newly licensed CPAs.
- The Exam remains composed of the four existing sections – Auditing and Attestation (AUD), Business Environment and Concepts (BEC), Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR) and Regulation (REG).
- Any combination of passing Exam sections prior to April 1 and passing Exam sections on or after April 1 (within the 18-month window following passing one section) will count toward licensure.
- Total CPA Exam testing time increased from 14 to 16 hours – four sections of four hours each.
- A new, 15-minute standardized break during each section that will not count against a candidate’s testing time had been added.

For candidate convenience, the 10-day extension of the testing window introduced in April 2016 will continue in the third and fourth quarters of 2017. The 10-day extension will not be available during the current April/May testing window to

allow the AICPA to follow the standard setting process and analyze Exam results to

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come.”

The Exam that launched April 1 is based on an extensive [practice analysis](#) overseen by the AICPA's Board of Examiners, which included input from key stakeholders throughout the accounting profession.

In addition to the changes to the CPA Exam which have already occurred, the AICPA is working on an improved user experience which is expected to launch in 2018. More information on that project will be announced later this year.

The CPA Exam is administered in 55 jurisdictions nationwide by the AICPA, NASBA and Prometric. The same version of the Exam is also administered in English internationally in Japan, Bahrain, Brazil, Kuwait, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates.

Detailed information on the CPA Exam is available online at www.aicpa.org/cpaexam and <https://nasba.org/exams/the-next-version-of-the-cpa-exam/>.

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