

**IFAC Education Committee**  
**Framework for International Education Statements**

**CONTENTS**

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	PAGE
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
OBJECTIVES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	1
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES .....	1
LANGUAGE.....	2
<b>EDUCATION COMMITTEE MISSION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b> .....	<b>2</b>
MISSION .....	2
KEY STRATEGIES .....	2
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOR ACCOUNTING EDUCATION STATEMENTS .....	3
<b>NATURE, SCOPE, AND AUTHORITY OF STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>3</b>
FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE STATEMENTS .....	3
TYPES OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE STATEMENTS .....	4
DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF STATEMENTS .....	5
<b>CONSULTATIVE PROCESS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>QUORUM AND VOTING</b> .....	<b>7</b>
DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS AS USED BY THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAPABILITY AND COMPETENCE	
<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b> .....	<b>11</b>

## **Introduction**

### **Objectives and Terms of Reference**

1. The mission of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) as set out in paragraph 2 of its Constitution is “the worldwide development and enhancement of an accountancy profession with harmonized standards, able to provide services of consistently high quality in the public interest.”
2. The Education Committee is a standing committee of the Board of IFAC, formed to develop standards, guidelines, discussion papers and other information documents on pre-qualification education and training of professional accountants and on continuing professional education and development for members of the accountancy profession. In addition, the Education Committee is expected to act as a catalyst in bringing together the developed and developing nations, as well as nations in transition, and to assist in the advancement of accountancy education programs worldwide, particularly where this will assist economic development.
3. The members who serve the Education Committee are nominated by the member bodies in the countries selected by the Board of IFAC. Members are appointed for an initial term of three years and elections will be held annually in such a way that one-third of the members shall retire each year. Continuous service on the Committee by the same person shall be limited to two consecutive three-year terms. For voting purposes, each member represented on the Committee has one vote.
4. In accordance with the Constitution of IFAC, member bodies subscribe to the mission set out in paragraph 1 above. In helping to fulfil this mission, IFAC expects member bodies to comply with these Standards. To assist member bodies in the implementation of International Education Standards and Guidelines for Professional Accountants, the Education Committee will seek to promote an understanding and acceptance of such standards and guidelines.

### **International Education Standards and Guidelines**

5. International Education Standards for Professional Accountants establish essential elements (e.g., subject matter, methods and techniques) that education and development programs are expected to contain and that have the potential for international recognition, acceptance and application. Although these Standards cannot override authoritative local pronouncements, they are prescriptive in nature. International Education Guidelines for Professional Accountants assist in the implementation of good practice or provide advice. They may also provide examples or guidance on the best practices or the most effective methods for dealing with the issues being addressed.

6. The Committee is conscious of the wide diversity of culture, language, and educational, legal, and social systems in the countries of the member bodies and of the variety of functions performed by accountants. Therefore, it is for each individual member body to determine the detailed requirements of the pre-qualification and post-qualification education and development programs. Accordingly, International Education Standards for Professional Accountants are intended to establish only the essential elements on which those programs for all professional accountants should be founded.
7. The Committee acknowledges that some member bodies are subject to legal or regulatory authorities within their jurisdictions. International Education Standards for Professional Accountants cannot legally override the requirements or restrictions placed on individual member bodies by such laws or regulations. However, member bodies must consider the Standards (and should consider the recommended practice in the Guidelines) in developing their education and development programs. Member bodies are also obliged to advise legislative and regulatory authorities of International Education Standards and Guidelines for Professional Accountants and seek, to the extent possible, to harmonize authoritative local pronouncements with those Standards and Guidelines.

### **Language**

8. The approved text of a statement is that published by the Education Committee in the English language. In all instances, American English spelling conventions are followed. After obtaining IFAC approval, and at their own cost, member bodies of IFAC are authorized to prepare translations of such statements to be issued in the language of their own countries as appropriate. These translations should indicate the name of the body that prepared the translation and that it is a translation of the approved text. If disputes arise, the original (American) English language text will prevail.

## **Education Committee Mission and Strategic Objectives**

### **Mission**

9. The mission of the Education Committee is to, “serve the public interest by the world-wide advancement of education and development for professional accountants leading to harmonized standards.”

### **Key Strategies**

10. To meet its mission, the Education Committee has currently developed four key strategies. They are:
  - (a) Understand the current and future needs of users of professional accountants and the implications for accountancy education;

- (b) Develop standards, guidance and other forms of advice and assistance for member bodies;
  - (c) Be aware of implementation issues; and
  - (d) Promote education for professional accountants.
11. It may be necessary for the Committee to develop other strategies in the future to help achieve its mission.

### **Strategic Objective for Accountancy Education Statements**

12. In relation to the second key strategy, it is the Committee's objective:
- To have on issue a series of Standards and other statements reflecting good practice in pre- and post-qualification professional accountancy education and development;
  - To create the education benchmarks for IFAC's compliance activities; and
  - To foster international debate on emerging issues relating to the education and development of professional accountants.

### **Nature, Scope, and Authority of Statements**

#### **Functions of Education Committee Statements**

13. Under the new publications framework adopted by the Committee in 2001, each of the Committee's publications is intended to fulfil one of the following three functions:
- (a) Prescribe "good practice" (i.e., establish standards for member bodies to achieve and be measured against);
  - (b) Provide guidance, interpretation, discussion, illustration, examples of application, or in any other way assist member bodies to achieve "good practice," and
  - (c) Discuss, promote or facilitate debate on education issues; reveal facts; present research or survey findings (i.e., describe situations); or promote awareness of issues.
14. All three functions (prescribe, provide guidance, discuss/present findings) are valid in achieving the Education Committee's mission. Different issues are best dealt with in different ways depending on, for example:
- The nature of the issue;
  - Its level of importance;
  - The level of detail being dealt with;
  - The degree to which broad compliance could be expected; and
  - Whether an issue is in its infancy or has reached maturity and broad consensus.

### **Types of Education Committee Statements**

15. The three different functions are expressed through three different types of statement.
  - International Education Standards for Professional Accountants (IES)
  - International Education Guidelines for Professional Accountants (IEG)
  - International Education Papers for Professional Accountants (IEP)
16. The three types of statement reflect, in descending order, the authoritative nature of the publications, in line with their intended functions. International Education Standards for Professional Accountants prescribe good practice and are thus more authoritative than International Education Guidelines for Professional Accountants, which provide guidance (for example, on how to achieve good practice). The Guidelines are, in turn, more directive than International Education Papers for Professional Accountants, which discuss issues (including emerging issues) or present findings.

### **Black and gray lettering**

17. Within International Education Standards for Professional Accountants, the “standard” paragraphs are in bold type-face (i.e., “black letter”). Commentary paragraphs, which may elaborate on or assist in the interpretation of the standard paragraphs, appear in plain type-face (i.e., “gray letter”). To comply with International Education Standards for Professional Accountants, member bodies will need to demonstrate that they meet the requirements of the “black letter” paragraphs.
18. Gray-letter commentary within International Education Standards for Professional Accountants serves the function of explaining or elaborating on the standard paragraphs written in bold type-face. As such, these commentary paragraphs are restricted in scope to providing an explanation of the specific standard paragraphs to which they relate. By contrast, International Education Guidelines for Professional Accountants do not contain bold type-face paragraphs because they present guidelines only (including recommended practice), rather than prescribe practice that is expected to be followed. However, a Guideline could be issued on a topic related to a Standard; if so, then the Guideline could interpret or elaborate on the Standard in greater depth, provide illustrations or advice on how the Standard could be met, or suggest recommended practice that is wider or deeper than the practice prescribed in the Standard.
19. The Education Committee considers the black/gray letter distinction to be useful and appropriate for the nature of International Education Standards for Professional Accountants. The Committee will, nevertheless, maintain a watching brief on future developments in approaches to standard setting in other areas of the profession.

## Definitions and Explanations of Statements

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
20. <u>International Education Standards for Professional Accountants</u> prescribe standards of generally accepted “good practice” in education and development for professional accountants.	International Education Standards for Professional Accountants express the benchmarks that member bodies are expected to meet in the preparation and continual development of professional accountants. The Standards establish the essential elements of the content and process of education and development at a level that is aimed at gaining international recognition, acceptance and application. Hence, member bodies must consider these requirements. (The gray-letter paragraphs within the Standards are intended to help explain the prescriptions within the black-letter, standard paragraphs.) International Education Standards for Professional Accountants cannot legally override local laws and regulations but will provide an authoritative reference for informing and influencing local regulators regarding generally accepted “good practice.”
21. <u>International Education Guidelines for Professional Accountants</u> assist in the implementation of generally accepted “good practice” in the education and development of professional accountants by providing advice or guidance on how to achieve “good practice” or current “best practice.”	International Education Guidelines for Professional Accountants may interpret, illustrate, or expand on matters related to International Education Standards for Professional Accountants. In this function, the Guidelines assist member bodies to implement and achieve “good practice” as prescribed in International Education Standards for Professional Accountants. The Guidelines may also recommend practice that is wider or deeper than the practice prescribed in a Standard. Alternatively, they may outline commendable methods or practices, including those that are recognized as current “best practice,” which member bodies may wish to adopt.

<i>Definition</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
22. <u>International Education Papers for Professional Accountants</u> promote discussion or debate on education and development issues affecting the accountancy profession, present findings, or describe situations of interest relating to education and development issues affecting the accountancy profession.	International Education Papers for Professional Accountants may raise discussion within the accountancy profession to a level whereby issues may be progressed or eventually resolved. As such, the Papers may explain, examine, analyze, or otherwise critically assess education issues and practices. The aim of such Papers is to provoke consideration of the issues and to encourage comment and feedback so that the issues can be advanced. In this way, they may be useful for exposing views, approaches and methods that are in early stages of development and thus may be useful forerunners to Standards and Guidelines. Alternatively, the Papers may be simply descriptive in nature. In this function, they aim to promote awareness of, and to transfer knowledge and information on, education and development issues or practices relating to the accountancy profession.

### **Consultative Process**

23. While the Education Committee is ultimately responsible for selecting the subject matter to be addressed by its Standards, Guidelines, and Papers, suggestions and proposals are encouraged from IFAC member bodies, other professional bodies, and interested individuals and organizations. The responsibility for carrying out the necessary research and for preparing Exposure Drafts of Standards and Guidelines, or drafts of Papers, may be delegated by the Committee to sub-committees, project teams comprising Committee members and technical advisors, or individuals. Sub-committees and project teams are always chaired by a Committee member but may include persons who are not members of the Committee or of a member body of IFAC.
24. In the developmental stage, the Committee assigns responsibility to a Project Manager to oversee the development of each statement. The Project Managers are Committee members or Technical Advisors and are responsible for reporting to the Control Group, in accordance with the project plan. The Control Group, which includes the Committee Chair and Technical Manager, is set up to monitor the progress of all projects for developing education statements. The Control Group also reviews early drafts for compliance with the projects' terms of reference and consistency of approach.

25. The Committee issues Exposure Drafts of all proposed Standards and Guidelines for comment by IFAC member bodies, the accounting academic community, regulators, government agencies, and others who may be interested in the statements. The Committee will expose a proposed Standard or Guideline for a reasonable time (usually six months) to allow for interested parties to consider and comment on its proposals. This provides an opportunity for those affected by Education Committee statements to present their views on them before the statements are finalized and approved by the Committee.
26. The Committee welcomes and considers all comments received on Exposure Drafts and makes such modifications as it considers appropriate. It also continues to consider any comments submitted on finalized Standards and Guidelines, for input to future revisions. Likewise, comments received on Papers are considered for future revisions and the advancement of issues.

### **Quorum and Voting**

27. A quorum of three-quarters of the Committee members (or their nominees) is required for a vote to be held.
28. Exposure Drafts of proposed Standards and Guidelines must be approved for issue by vote of at least two-thirds of the total voting rights of the Education Committee participating at a meeting.
29. Before the statement is published and released as a final document, the final draft of a Standard or Guideline, or of a Paper submitted for approval, must be approved by at least two-thirds of the total voting rights of the Education Committee participating at a meeting.

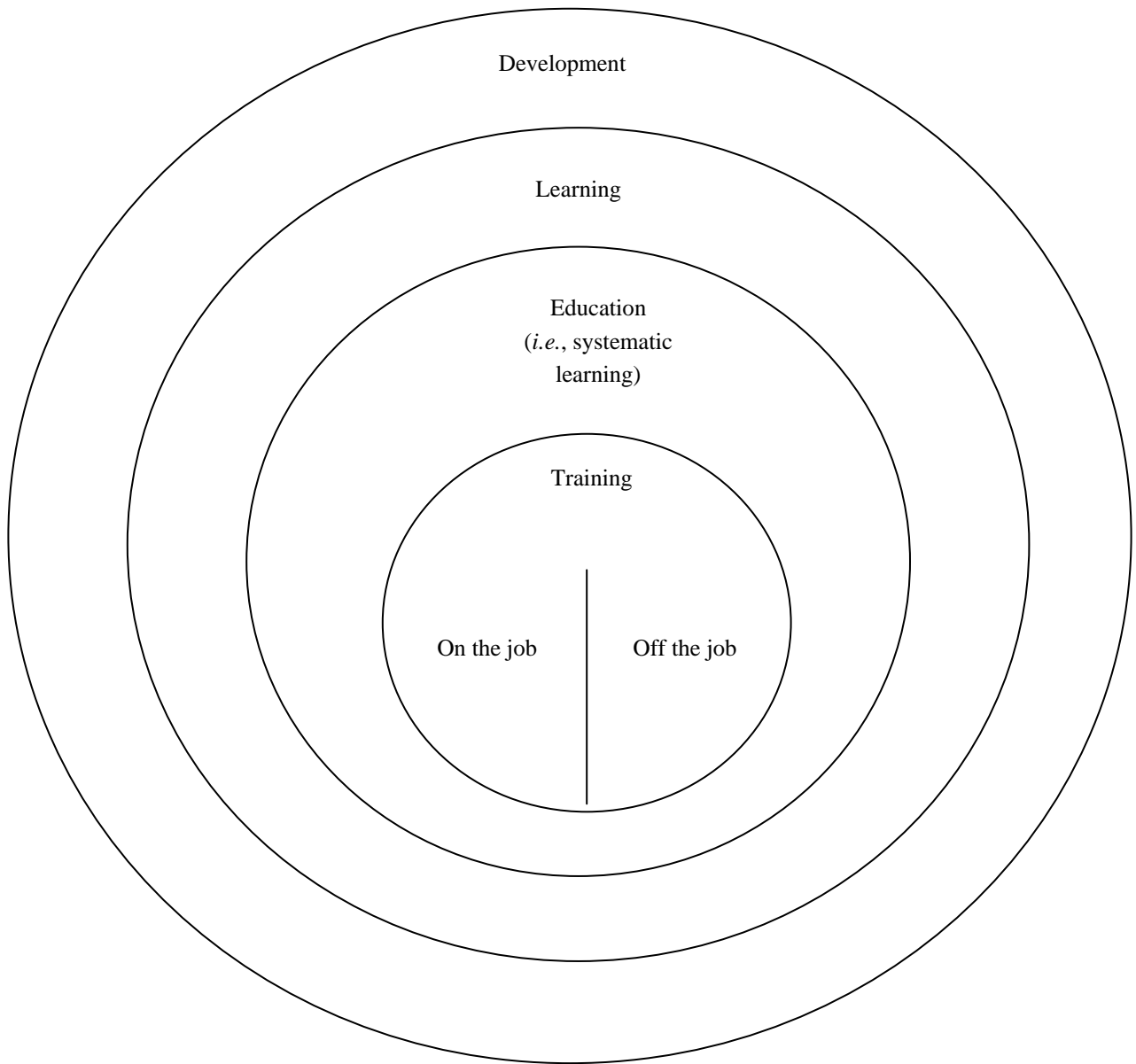


## DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS AS USED BY THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

30. The following diagram illustrates the relationships among key terms relating to education and development concepts, as used by the Education Committee. Some of these terms are defined in the Glossary of Terms later in this publication. The following discussion explains what is meant by the various terms and how they fit together as subsets of the development process.
31. Readers' own interpretations and usage of such terms may differ slightly from the way they are explained in the following paragraphs. The Education Committee does not insist that the following discussion represents the only "true meaning" of these terms; rather, the following paragraphs explain how the terms are used in the Education Committee's statements, together with the underlying thinking and the inter-relationships among them.
32. "Development" is both a process (as depicted in the diagram) and an outcome. English language dictionaries (e.g., *Oxford* and *Collins*) take care to explain that "development" means to "bring to" (i.e., process) or to "come to" (i.e., outcome) a more advanced state. Hence, development can refer to an individual who "is being developed" (process) as well as to an individual who "has been developed" (outcome – the finished state).
33. As a process, "development" is the over-arching term used by the Education Committee, encapsulating every process by which an individual grows. It refers to the growth of capabilities that contribute to competence, however achieved. Most (but not all) development, in a professional sense, comes about through learning.
34. "Learning" refers to the main processes by which individuals acquire capabilities (i.e., professional knowledge; professional skills; and professional values, ethics, and attitudes). Learning can be systematic and formal, or unsystematic and informal. When individuals learn through a systematic process, it is referred to as "education." By contrast, there are many valuable learning processes other than "education," such as self-directed and unstructured gaining of knowledge, experience, observation, reflection, and other non-programmed activities aimed at developing capabilities.
35. "Education" refers to those learning processes that are systematic, structured, and often formal. The processes are therefore programmed to a significant extent. Education includes a form of developmental process referred to as training.
36. "Training" is a particular type of education, which focuses on how the individual does the job. Training is usually a mix of instruction and practice. It is experience related, and thus has a more practical or applied element than other forms of education. Training may be "on the job" (i.e., while the trainee is performing real tasks in the work place) or "off the job" (i.e., which takes place while the trainee is not actually performing work).

37. Throughout this publication, reference is made to the work of the Education Committee in terms of the “education and development” of professional accountants. In this sense, the phrase relates to “education” as the main *process* and to “development” as the *outcome*.

Subsets of the development process



## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAPABILITY AND COMPETENCE

38. The concepts of capability and competence may be described as being the two sides of a coin. The following is an elaboration on terms used in the Glossary of Terms (next section).
39. ***Capabilities are the professional knowledge; professional skills; and professional values, ethics, and attitudes required to demonstrate competence.*** Capabilities are the attributes held by individuals that enable them to perform their roles.
40. The possession of capabilities gives an indication that an individual has the ability to perform competently in the work place.
41. ***Competence is being able to perform a work role to a defined standard, with reference to real working environments.*** It refers to the actions that individuals undertake to determine whether they can actually perform to the required standard. When an individual draws on capabilities to perform the required tasks to the required standard, competence is deemed to have been achieved (i.e., the individual is competent).

CAPABILITY	COMPETENCE
<b>Key concepts</b>	
Attributes	Actions
Potential	Actual
Possess	Demonstrate
<i>Can be expressed as learning outcomes</i>	<i>Can be expressed as performance outcomes</i>
<b>Types of capability</b>	<b>Types of competence</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional knowledge</li> <li>Professional skills (e.g., intellectual, technical, non-technical, organizational, personal, interpersonal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes the range of performance outcomes relating to practice standards (e.g., functional, managerial, and inter-personal)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional values, ethics, and attitudes (e.g., ethical values, professional manner, commitment to high technical standards, skeptical attitude, commitment to continual improvement and life-long learning, appreciation of public interest and social responsibility)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes the range of performance outcomes relating to behavioral standards (e.g., ethical and professional conduct, demonstrating appropriate skepticism, performance in relation to professional development)</li> </ul>

## **Glossary of Terms**

42. This glossary comprises a collection of defined terms, many of which have been specifically defined within existing Education Committee statements. Some of the existing terms may be modified, and other terms added to the glossary, as they are (re)defined in future publications.
43. The Committee acknowledges that terms may be understood to have different common meanings, nuances of meaning, and applications among the various countries in which member bodies operate. The glossary does not prescribe the use of terms by member bodies. Rather, the glossary is a list of defined terms, with special meanings, for their use within the Standards, Guidelines and Papers produced by the Education Committee.
44. Words marked with an asterisk (\*) indicate terms that are defined elsewhere in the glossary.

**Assessment**                      All forms of tests of professional competence,\* whether in writing or otherwise, including examinations, carried out at any time throughout the learning process.

**Best practice**

Practices considered to be exemplary, of the highest order, the most advanced, or leading in a particular area in the education of professional accountants.\*

Explanation:

*“Best practice” refers to the best examples of established practice in the preparation of professional accountants. “Best practice” will often go beyond “good practice” and, as such, is at a higher level than the considered minimum requirements. Statements and examples of “best practice” are essential for the advancement of accountancy education and provide useful guidance to member bodies for the continual improvement of their education programs.*

**Candidate**

Any individual who is enrolled for assessment as part of a professional accountancy education program.

Explanation:

*A candidate is an individual who is undergoing, or about to undergo, a formal assessment as part of accountancy education. The term refers to an individual who is still in the process of demonstrating the capabilities or competences required for a particular purpose (e.g. professional examination). The assessment may relate to either a program for qualifying as a professional accountant or a post-qualifying education program. The term does not relate to an individual at the stage following completion of an education program (i.e., it excludes those who have completed the requirements for membership of a professional body and are in the process of applying for membership).*

- Capabilities**                    The professional knowledge;\* professional skills;\* and professional values, ethics, and attitudes\* required to demonstrate competence.\*  
*Explanation:*  
*Capabilities are the attributes held by individuals that enable them to perform their roles, whereas competence refers to the actual demonstration of performance. The possession of capabilities gives an indication that an individual has the ability to perform competently in the work place. Capabilities include content knowledge; technical and functional skills; behavioral skills; intellectual abilities (including professional judgement); and professional values, ethics, and attitudes. They are sometimes referred to, in other literature, as competencies, capacities, abilities, key skills, core skills, fundamental skills and values, attitudes, distinguishing characteristics, pervasive qualities, and individual attributes.*
- Competence**                    Being able to perform a work role to a defined standard, with reference to real working environments.  
*Explanation:*  
*Competence refers to the demonstrated ability to perform relevant roles or tasks to the required standard. Whereas capability refers to the attributes held by individuals that give them the potential to perform, competence refers to the actual demonstration of performance. Competence may be assessed by a variety of means, including work place performance, work place simulations, written and oral tests of various types, and self-assessment.*
- Continuing professional development (CPD)**                    Learning\* activities for developing and maintaining the capabilities\* of professional accountants to perform competently within their professional environments.  
*Explanation:*  
*Continuing professional development is aimed at the post-qualification development and maintenance of professional competence. It involves the development of capabilities through either formal and verifiable learning programs (sometimes referred to as “continuing professional education” – CPE) or informal learning activity.*

**Development**

1. The acquisition of capabilities,\* which contribute to competence.\*
2. The state at which capabilities have been acquired.

Explanation:

*Development, as a process, refers to the growth of capabilities, which contribute to competence, however achieved. Individuals may develop their abilities through a wide range of processes such as learning, including education and training; experience; reflection; observation or receipt of information; or through natural growth over time.*

*Development may also refer to the final stage of growth at which an individual is considered to be fully developed, as a result of the development process. However, it is recognized that, with the need for continual learning, the process of developing one's capabilities and the subsequent reaching of a targeted stage of development are not fixed or permanent states.*



**Distributed learning** An education process in which either the majority of the instruction is delivered at a different time from when the instruction is received or when the instructor and student are in different places.

Explanation:

*A primary feature of distributed learning is that instructors and students are not required to be in the same place at the same time. “Distributed learning” includes, but is not restricted to, “distance learning.” Distributed learning can take place over short or long distances, whereas distance learning implies distribution across only significant distances.*

**Education** A systematic process aimed at developing knowledge, skills, and other capabilities\* within individuals. It includes “training.”\*

Explanation:

*Education is a systematic learning process whereby individuals develop capabilities considered desirable by society. Education is usually characterized by the growth of an individual’s mental and practical abilities, as well as maturing in attitude, resulting in an enhanced ability of the individual to function and contribute to society, in either specific or non-specific contexts. While often conducted in academic environments, education also includes systematic learning processes in other environments, such as on-the-job and off-the-job training. Education is, by nature, somewhat planned and structured and therefore excludes casual, unsystematic learning and developmental processes.*

**Good practice** Those elements considered essential to the education\* and development\* of professional accountants\* and performed at a standard necessary to the achievement of competence.\*

Explanation:

*“Good practice” relates not only to the range of content and processes of education and development programs, but also to the level or standard at which they are performed (i.e., the depth and quality of the programs). The IFAC Education Committee is conscious of the wide diversity of culture; language; and educational, legal, and social systems in the countries of the member bodies and of the variety of functions performed by accountants. Different factors within these environments may vary the ability of member bodies to adopt some aspects of “good practice.” Nevertheless, member bodies should continuously aspire to “good practice” and achieve it wherever possible.*

**Higher education** Education\* beyond secondary school level, usually at universities or colleges.

Explanation:

*Primary and secondary education refer to the mainly compulsory element of schooling required by the governments of many countries. "Higher" education refers to a third order of education, which succeeds secondary education and for which a secondary education qualification (or equivalent) is often a prerequisite. It is at a higher level than "higher secondary" or "upper secondary" education and is sometimes referred to as "tertiary education."*

**Information technology** Hardware and software products, information system operations and management processes, and the human resources and skills required to apply those products and processes to the task of information production and information system development, management and control.

- Learning** A broad range of processes whereby an individual acquires capabilities.\*  
Explanation:  
*Learning can be achieved by systematic and relatively formal processes such as education (including training) or processes such as day-to-day work experience, reading published material, observation, and reflection, for which the process of acquiring capabilities tends to be less systematic and relatively informal.*
- Mentor** Professional accountants who are responsible for guiding and advising trainees and for assisting in the development of the trainees' competence.\*
- Post-qualification** The period after qualification\* as an individual member of an IFAC member body.  
Explanation:  
*The term "post-qualification" is usually associated with activities and requirements relating to the professional development of those who have already obtained a professional qualification. It is often associated with action relating to the maintenance or further development of professional competence. While "post-qualification" refers to the period after qualifying as a professional accountant, the term is not restricted to formal qualifications obtained after qualifying as a professional accountant.*
- Practical experience (or professional experience)** Work experience, undertaken by a trainee\* or a qualified professional accountant\* that is relevant to the work of professional accountants.\* The program of experience enables the individuals' development of professional competence\* (including professional behavior) in the work place and provides a means whereby individuals can demonstrate the achievement of professional competence in the work place.  
Explanation:  
*Practical experience refers to the on-the-job execution of tasks that are relevant to the field of accountancy. The practical experience part of the qualifying process is intended to facilitate the development and direct application of professional knowledge; professional skills; and professional values, ethics, and attitudes. Ultimately, it is through practical experience that trainees will demonstrate their competence to perform the roles of professional accountants. Practical experience also refers to the ongoing experience of professional accountants in the accountancy field. Practical experience is sometimes referred to as "professional experience" and has the same meaning as that term.*

<b>Pre-qualification</b>	<p>The period before qualification* as an individual member of an IFAC member body.</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> <i>The term “pre-qualification” is usually associated with activities and requirements relating to the development of those who have not yet obtained a professional qualification.</i></p>
<b>Professional accountant</b>	<p>A person who is a member of an IFAC member body.</p>
<b>Professional accountancy education</b>	<p>Education* that builds on general education* and imparts professional knowledge;* professional skills;* and professional values, ethics, and attitudes.* It may or may not take place in an academic environment.</p>
<b>Professional knowledge</b>	<p>Those topics that make up the subject of accountancy as well as other business disciplines that, together, constitute the essential body of knowledge for professional accountants.*</p>
<b>Professional skills</b>	<p>The various types of abilities required to apply professional knowledge, and professional values, ethics, and attitudes* appropriately and effectively in a professional context.</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> <i>Professional accountants are required to possess a range of skills, including technical and functional skills, organizational and business management skills, personal skills, interpersonal and communication skills, a variety of intellectual skills, and skills in forming professional judgments.</i></p>
<b>Professional values, ethics and attitudes</b>	<p>The professional behavior and characteristics that identify professional accountants* as members of a profession. They include the principles of conduct (i.e., ethical principles) generally associated with, and considered essential in defining the distinctive characteristics of, professional behavior.</p> <p><u>Explanation:</u> <i>Professional values, ethics, and attitudes include a commitment to technical competence, ethical behavior (e.g., independence, objectivity, confidentiality, and integrity), professional manner (e.g., due care, timeliness, courteousness, respect, responsibility, and reliability), pursuit of excellence (e.g., commitment to continual improvement and life-long learning), and social responsibility (e.g., awareness and consideration of the public interest).</i></p>

- Qualification** Qualification as a professional accountant\* means, at a given point in time, an individual is considered to have met, and continues to meet, the requirements for recognition as a professional accountant.\*  
Explanation  
*Qualification is the formal recognition of an individual as having attained a professional designation, or having been admitted to a class of professional membership, that signifies the individual is a professional accountant. Qualification implies that the individual has been assessed as competent in terms of meeting the requirements prescribed for obtaining professional accountant status. While the term “qualification” can be applied to various stages of professional development and classes of membership, its usage in IFAC Education Committee documents (unless otherwise indicated) relates to the benchmark for recognition as a professional accountant.*
- Relevant experience** Participation in work activities in an environment appropriate to the application of professional knowledge;\* professional skills;\* and professional values, ethics, and attitudes.\*
- Specialization** The formal recognition by a member body of a group of its members possessing distinctive competence\* in a field, or fields, of activity related to the work of the professional accountant.\*
- Student** An individual following a course of study, including a trainee.\*  
Explanation:  
*In the context of professional education, a student is an individual undertaking a course or program of study deemed necessary for the education of professional accountants, whether general or professional in nature.*
- Technical accounting staff** Staff engaged in technical accounting work who are directed by or support professional accountants.\*  
Explanation:  
*“Technical accounting staff” includes staff customarily known as “accounting technicians” and covers staff engaged in technical support roles across all areas of accountancy. The term does not refer to trainees who are in the process of qualifying as professional accountants.*

**Trainee** An individual undertaking pre-qualification\* work experience and training\* within the work place.

Explanation:

*A trainee is an individual who is undertaking a practical experience or work-place training program for qualification as a professional accountant.*

**Training** Pre- and post-qualification\* educational activities, within the context of the work place, aimed at bringing a student\* or professional accountant\* to an agreed level of professional competence.\*

Explanation

*Training includes work place-based education and experience activities for developing an individual's competence to perform tasks relevant to the role of the professional accountant. Training may be undertaken while performing actual tasks (on-the-job training) or indirectly through instruction or work-place simulation (off-the-job training). Training is conducted within the context of the work place, with reference to the specific roles or tasks performed by professional accountants. It can include any activity purposefully designed to improve the ability of an individual to fulfil the practical experience requirements for qualification as a professional accountant.*