



ISCA Financial Forensic Accounting Qualification

Candidate Handbook

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1. About the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants

1.1 Introduction

The Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants (ISCA) is the national accountancy body of Singapore. ISCA's vision is to be a globally recognised professional accountancy body, bringing value to our members, the profession and wider community. There are over 32,000 ISCA members making their stride in businesses across industries in Singapore and around the world.

Established in 1963, ISCA is an advocate of the interests of the profession. Possessing a Global Mindset, with Asian Insights, ISCA leverages its regional expertise, knowledge, and networks with diverse stakeholders to contribute towards Singapore's transformation into a global accountancy hub.

ISCA is the Administrator of the Singapore CA Qualification and the Designated Entity to confer the Chartered Accountant of Singapore - CA (Singapore) - designation.

ISCA is a member of Chartered Accountants Worldwide, a global family that brings together the members of leading institutes to create a community of over 1.8 million Chartered Accountants and students in more than 190 countries.

For more information, visit www.isca.org.sg.

2. ISCA Financial Forensic Accounting Qualification

2.1 Background

The ISCA Financial Forensic Accounting (FFA) Qualification, leading to the conferment of the ISCA Financial Forensic Professional (FFP) credential, is the first applied learning financial forensic accounting qualification developed by a professional body in Southeast Asia.

ISCA recognises that financial forensics is a niche area that requires professionals with specialised knowledge and skill sets. To support the Singapore government's call for deepening of skills, ISCA has worked with industry experts who are leading financial forensic professionals from both the public and private sectors to develop the ISCA FFA Qualification, in a bid to build and shore up capabilities in the financial forensics field.

Targeted at the following main groups, this qualification aims to equip professionals with practical and portable skills.

Target Group	Aim
Professional accountants who wish to broaden their accounting and finance skills in the area of financial forensics	Prepares accountants without a financial forensic background to conduct forensic investigations competently across industries and sectors, from law enforcement to forensic advisory, and banking and finance. Forensic accountants use a combination of accounting and finance knowledge, analytical, legal, technological and investigative skills to carry out detailed tests of transactions, interpret complex financial information, summarise and present findings for reports which may be used for litigation support purposes.
Existing financial forensic specialists who wish to deepen their forensic accounting skills and achieve professional recognition for their specialised skill sets	Reinforces financial forensic knowledge and allows existing specialists to gain proficiency in identifying and explaining the different types of white-collar crime and compliance requirements in conducting investigations and preparing reports for different stakeholders; they will be updated and be able to leverage the latest technological tools, approaches and techniques for digital evidence gathering and cyber investigations.

2.2 Becoming an ISCA FFA Qualification Candidate

Applications for the ISCA FFA Qualification are open all year round except in December. Successful applicants will be approved as candidates after ISCA has assessed that applicants have met the following entry requirements.

At least a recognised bachelor's degree or equivalent in the following disciplines:

- 2.2.1 Accountancy related; or
- 2.2.2 Other degrees with one year full-time and recent relevant work experience in financial forensic-related fields such as law enforcement, financial and regulatory compliance and forensic advisory.

All candidates are required to pay an annual candidate fee from their second (2nd) year of admission onwards (i.e. 1 January of the calendar year) regardless of the date of admission approval as a candidate.

Candidates can only register for the ISCA FFA module examination if their candidature is not suspended due to outstanding fees owing to the Institute.

The annual candidate fee is due on 1 January and payable by 31 January each year.

3. ISCA Forensic Financial Professional (FFP) Credential

Upon completion of all four modules, ISCA FFA Qualification graduates who have acquired at least three years of recent relevant work experience in financial forensic-related fields can apply for ISCA membership, subject to the prevailing membership admission requirements, and be conferred the ISCA FFP credential.

ISCA FFP credential holders who are ISCA members are required to abide by the membership rules.

4. Qualification structure

4.1 Overview

The qualification consists of four modules:

Module	Focus Areas
Module 1 – Forensic Accounting and Investigation	Forensic accounting methodology and investigation approaches
Module 2 – Digital Forensics	Digital forensics including data analytics and cyber response
Module 3 – Financial Crime	Financial crime compliance and investigation in the banking and financial sector
Module 4 – Professional Requirements	Mandatory professional requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="600 920 1393 1003">i. Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics (ISCA Ethics Pronouncement (EP) 100) <li data-bbox="600 1008 1393 1182">ii. Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism – Requirements and Guidelines for Professional Accountants in Singapore (ISCA EP 200)

These modules may be attempted in any sequence, but it is recommended that candidates should attempt Module 1 first. There is no restriction on the number of modules candidates may attempt at each examination session.

4.2 Candidature validity period and awards

The candidature validity period for the ISCA FFA Qualification is **two (2) years** starting from the year of admission as a candidate. Candidates who wish to apply for the **ISCA Financial Forensic Professional (FFP) credential** must complete **ALL** four (4) modules within the candidature period. As an example, if you are admitted as a candidate in Year 2020, your candidature validity period will expire on 31 December 2022.

Candidates have the flexibility to attempt the qualification on a modular basis and will be:

- 4.2.1 awarded with a “Certificate of Completion” for successfully completing and passing the examination of each module; and
- 4.2.2 notified in a letter to be sent via email for successfully completing all four (4) modules.

There is no exemption for ISCA FFA Qualification regardless of the candidates’ prior course of study.

4.3 Compulsory workshops and duration

Candidates who have registered for the examination session of the following modules must attend all the workshops that will be held at least one month prior to the examination:

- 4.3.1 Forensic Accounting and Investigation
- 4.3.2 Digital Forensics
- 4.3.3 Financial Crime

The workshop duration of each module is between two (2) and three (3) days. Please refer to the **important dates and module timetable** published on the ISCA FFA Qualification’s website for the dates, timings, training venue and updates.

4.4 Compulsory workshop attendance

- 4.4.1 Attendance will be taken at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions of the workshops for regulatory compliance requirement.

4.5 Examination duration

Each examination session duration is 120 minutes, except for Module 4 Professional Requirements which is 60 minutes. Please refer to each module study guide for the examination approach.

4.6 Examination registration

4.6.1 Examination registration period

There are at least two examination sessions to be held in each calendar year.

Please refer to **important dates and module timetable** published on the ISCA website for the examination sessions.

Candidates who have successfully registered and paid for the module examination must sit for the examination session they have selected.

The examination registration is opened at least two (2) months prior to the examination session, for a limited period.

For example:

Examination Session	Examination Registration Period
May	Mid-January to end February
November	Mid-July to end August

4.6.2 Confirmation of examination entries

Candidates will receive an email notification on the examination details which can be accessed via the online learning management system at least two (2) weeks before the examination dates subject to the following conditions:

- 4.6.2.1 Full workshop attendance (i.e. 100% attendance) of those modules they have registered for examination; and
- 4.6.2.2 No outstanding annual candidate fee (only payable on the second year of admission. See paragraph 2.2), examination fee and other applicable fees.

4.7 Examination delivery method

Candidates will need to attempt and pass a closed-book, computer-based examination for each registered module.

Candidates are required to bring their **OWN PERSONAL** fully-charged laptop for the examination as:

- 4.7.1 **NO** laptop will be provided; and

4.7.2 **NO** charger will be provided and charging points are limited in the examination room.

A user guide on how to install and use the examination software is available on the ISCA FFA Qualification's website.

4.8 Examination format

The examination questions will be set based on either one of the following formats:

- 4.8.1 multiple-choice question – choose **ONE** correct answer and/or
- 4.8.2 multiple-response question – choose the applicable correct answers (there could be more than one correct answer).

4.9 Minimum passing mark

The minimum passing mark of each module is at least 60%.

5. Examination policies

5.1 Absenteeism

5.1.1 Examination day

Candidates who have successfully registered and paid for the module examination must sit for the examination session they have selected, unless they have valid reasons, which are supported with official documents for their absence on the examination day. The reasons and supporting documents must be submitted within three (3) working days from the day of absence.

5.1.2 Workshop day

Candidates must attend **ALL (NO partial)** the workshops of each of the module they have registered for examination unless they have valid reasons, which are supported with official documents for their absence on the workshop day. The reasons and supporting documents must be submitted within three (3) working days from the day of absence.

5.1.3 Please note that absenteeism due to the following reasons will **NOT** be accepted:

- 5.1.3.1 Work exigency;
- 5.1.3.2 Overseas business trips; or
- 5.1.3.3 National service obligations which are made known to the candidates in advance before the examination registration starts.

5.2 Examination fees forfeiture

Candidates who are absent on examination day and/or any of the workshops without valid reasons will have their examination fees forfeited. Please also see “Fees refund” under paragraph 11.

ISCA will assess the reasons supported with valid official documents on a case-by-case basis. Candidates who have valid reasons will have to re-register for the next available examination session and are required to attend the workshops.

5.3 Punctuality for examination and workshops

Due to unforeseen circumstances

5.3.1 Candidates who are late for the examination and/or workshop due to unforeseen circumstances that are beyond their control such as public transport breakdown can request for a travel chit from the public transport operator such as SMRT and submit it to the invigilator/workshop trainer.

The invigilator/workshop trainer will assess the situation on a case-by-case basis, to either:

- 5.3.1.1 allow and grant you extra time to sit for your computer-based examination; or
- 5.3.1.2 allow you to join the workshop which has already commenced; or
- 5.3.1.3 reschedule your examination/workshop to the next available examination session/workshop without further charges.

Due to other reasons

5.3.2 Candidates who are late for the first 30 minutes without valid reasons may be allowed to sit for the examination, but they will **NOT** be given extra time to attempt the questions. The invigilator reserves the right to refuse the late candidates from sitting the examination. In such situation, the examination fee will be forfeited.

5.4 Deferment

Candidates are

- 5.4.1 encouraged to stay committed and complete the qualification at their soonest; and
- 5.4.2 reminded to plan their schedule and consider carefully before registering for the next available examination session and workshops that best suit their schedule.

Deferment of examination and workshops will **NOT** be allowed.

5.5 Maximum examination attempts

There is no maximum number of attempts for each module examination.

Candidates are allowed to re-attempt the module examination for the unsuccessful module at a re-examination fee of S\$856 ¹ per module (inclusive of GST) and are **NOT** required to re-attend the workshops. Candidates may register for the re-attempt of the unsuccessful module examination at any available exam session within their candidature period.

However, if candidates wish to re-attend the workshops, they can do so but will have to pay the full fee of S\$1,605 ¹ per module (inclusive of GST).

5.6 Examination regulations

Before the start of the examination

- 5.6.1 Ensure that you have already downloaded the encrypted examination file onto your laptop.
- 5.6.2 Ensure that windows update and the auto-sleep mode on your laptops have been disabled. Candidates are strongly recommended to disable the anti-virus software on their laptops before the examination.
- 5.6.3 Bring your own personal fully-charged laptop and charger.
- 5.6.4 Bring your identity documents such as national registration identity card (NRIC), employment pass or passport.
- 5.6.5 Be punctual for examination.
- 5.6.6 Place your identity documents on the table for the invigilator to conduct identity verification.

¹ This fee is only applicable to the three modules with a workshop component.

- 5.6.7 Examination centre will be open 30 minutes prior to the examination start time. Please be seated at your assigned desk at least 15 minutes before the start of each examination.
- 5.6.8 You are not allowed to access any hardcopy or softcopy of study materials once you have entered the examination room.
- 5.6.9 You are only allowed to bring in writing materials such as pen, pencil, highlighter. Writing papers will be provided during the examination.
- 5.6.10 Raise your hand if you have any questions to ask the invigilator.
- 5.6.11 The following items should **NOT** be brought into the examination centre:
 - (i) Smartwatches
 - (ii) Any unauthorised electronic, communication, entertainment or gaming devices capable of capturing, storing, displaying and/or transmitting visual, audio or verbal information; and
 - (iii) Any unauthorised equipment or materials.
- 5.6.12 All bags or other unauthorised personal belongings must be placed in the designated area in the examination centre.
- 5.6.13 Do not bring any valuable personal belongings to the examination centre. ISCA will not be responsible for the loss of these valuable items.
- 5.6.14 Please bring along a jacket or sweater as the examination room might be cold. (Optional)

During the examination

- 5.6.15 You can leave the examination centre 30 minutes after the examination has started only if you have completed and submitted your examination.
- 5.6.16 Please raise your hand to seek the invigilator's help if any point in time you are unsure on how to use the examination software.
- 5.6.17 The duration of each examination module includes the time for reading and answering the questions. No extra time will be given.
- 5.6.18 Read all the instructions and questions carefully.
- 5.6.19 Good time management is important. Do not spend too much time on a few questions, leaving no time for the others.
- 5.6.20 If you are not feeling well and/or need to go to the wash room urgently, remain seated and raise your hand to inform the invigilator. The invigilator will assist you and escort you out of the examination centre.
- 5.6.21 Do not cheat or assist in cheating. Candidates found cheating could be barred from taking the qualification permanently and any passed results will be forfeited.
- 5.6.22 Discovery of unauthorised access to the internet during the examination is considered cheating and candidate is liable to disciplinary action including (but not limited to) suspension or immediate disqualification from the programme.

- 5.6.23 Do not talk or communicate with other candidates during the examination.
- 5.6.24 Do not eat during the examination but you may bring a bottle of plain water into the examination centre.
- 5.6.25 Do not remove any used or unused writing papers that will be provided.
- 5.6.26 You are **NOT** allowed to leave the examination centre during the last 30 minutes of the examination.

At the end of the examination

- 5.6.27 Stop all activities immediately and follow the instructions given by the invigilator.

5.7 Misconduct during examination

- 5.7.1 If candidates are found cheating, attempting to cheat or assisting in cheating during the examination, misbehaving including not complying with the examination regulations during the examination, they may be disqualified from taking the examination immediately and permanently barred from taking the qualification. Their examination results including any passed ones will be forfeited.

5.8 Disciplinary procedures

- 5.8.1 All ISCA candidates and members must adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics and Institute (Membership and Fees) Rules.
- 5.8.2 All cases of non-compliance with examination regulations and complaint regarding a candidate's misconduct shall be made to ISCA. ISCA shall investigate any candidates suspected of involvement in any non-compliant activities, irregularity or misconduct. Where a case for non-compliance with examination regulations or misconduct is to be considered, the candidate will be notified and given opportunity to explain in writing the circumstances of the case. A plea of forgetfulness or accident shall not be accepted under any circumstances in the case of any breach of the examination regulations.
- 5.8.3 If there is a case of non-compliance, irregularity or misconduct, this will be referred to the oversight committee for investigation and potential disciplinary action. The Institute reserves the right to withhold the release of examination results, void the examination of the candidate it may concern, and bar the candidate from sitting for future examination if there is any suspicion that he/she is involved in irregularity or misconduct while investigations are still ongoing.

5.8.4 Candidates who are found guilty of misconduct may be removed from the Candidate Register on disciplinary grounds.

5.9 Health issue

If candidates are hospitalised due to pro-longed illness or are suffering from infectious diseases such as chicken pox, hand, foot or mouth disease (HFMD), please get your attending doctor to certify that you are medically fit to sit for the examinations.

6. Personal data declaration

A third-party exam software provider is appointed to provide a platform for delivering the computer-based examination. Candidates who have submitted their examination registration form online would have consented to the third-party examination software provider's collection of general user information for all Exam Takers (Candidates) that use software, including, but not limited to makes and models of computers used by Exam Takers, types and versions of software used by Exam Takers, security and Software performance related information, and other exam-related data.

7. Results

An email on how to check your results will be sent to the candidates approximately six (6) weeks after the examinations.

8. Appeal for results review

The results are final and **NO** appeal is permitted.

9. Examination venue

Candidates may login to the online learning management system to access details on the examination date, time and venue.

10. Fees

10.1 Programme fees

No	Name of Module	Amount per Module (Inclusive of GST)
1.	Forensic Accounting and Investigation	S\$1,605.00 *
2.	Digital Forensics	S\$1,605.00 *
3.	Financial Crime	S\$1,605.00 *

No	Name of Module	Amount per Module (Inclusive of GST)
4.	Professional Requirements	S\$214.00
	Total fee	S\$5,029.00

*Amount includes examination registration and workshop fees.

10.2 Other fees

No	Types of Fees	Amount (Inclusive of GST)
1.	One-off application fee per application	S\$107.00
2.	Annual candidate fee <i>(payable from second year onwards after admission – i.e. 1 January of the calendar year)</i>	S\$160.50
3.	Re-attempt examination fee per module for all modules except no. 4 below (NO workshop) <i>(Only for Candidates who have failed their module examination and will like to re-attempt the examination within their candidature period)</i>	S\$856.00
4.	Re-attempt examination fee for Professional Requirements module <i>(Only for Candidates who have failed their module examination and will like to re-attempt the examination within their candidature period)</i>	S\$107.00

ISCA reserves the right to revise the fees without prior notice. Please visit the [website](#) for updates.

11. Fees refund

All fees paid are **NOT** transferable and refundable.

12. Suspension of candidature

The payment due date for annual candidate fee is on the 31 January of each year.

Candidates who fail to pay the annual candidate fees in the next two (2) months after the payment due date will be suspended from taking the qualification for the

whole calendar year. They will be classified as withdrawn candidates in the next calendar year on 1 January if there is no payment of the outstanding fee.

If the candidates decide to continue taking the ISCA FFA Qualification during the suspension period, they are only allowed to do so by paying all the outstanding fees owing to ISCA.

13. Withdrawal policy

Candidates who would like to withdraw from ISCA FFA Qualification on their own accord must submit their withdrawal request in writing to ISCA with supporting documentation and explanation. ISCA will assess and approve the request on a case-by-case basis. Upon approval, the candidate would receive a confirmation email within two (2) weeks from the date of the request. Please note that all fees paid to ISCA are non-refundable and non-transferable.

If the candidates wish to re-join ISCA FFA Qualification, they are only allowed to do so after one (1) year from the withdrawal date and will have to re-submit the application.

ISCA will treat the application as new and assess it based on prevailing entry requirements. All past results will be forfeited.

14. Contact details

Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants (ISCA),
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Singapore 049709

For enquiries and administrative matters relating to ISCA Financial Forensic Accounting Qualification, please contact us at:

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