

CIMA's CGMA[®] practical experience requirements (PER)

guidance for applicants

To gain the Chartered Global Management Accountant[®] (CGMA) designation, you need three years verified relevant professional experience.

The professional experience requirements are an essential part of the CGMA Qualification and CIMA's membership application process. They complement the assessments and demonstrate your ability to apply your knowledge and skills in the context of your professional experience.

Your application will be assessed to determine whether you have gained enough experience to be awarded Associate membership — giving you the Associate Chartered Management Accountant (ACMA) and CGMA designations.

This document sets out the criteria for the assessment of practical experience and provides you with guidance to help you successfully complete your application for membership. Additional support materials, including FAQs can be found **here**.

Practical experience requirements – transferrable and relevant skills and experience

Our members and candidates work in a broad range of finance roles in a wide variety of industries around the globe. The professional achievements assessed under the experience requirements are those which are essential for you to acquire to become a qualified management accountant. The assessment of professional achievement is designed to assist you in proactively managing your own professional development to gain relevant work experience, demonstrate how you have put your examination successes into practice and provide evidence that you have achieved the critical and relevant skills and experience employers require, setting a solid foundation for a successful career in finance and your continuing professional development.

Your membership application and assessment of professional achievement comprises three key elements:

- Demonstrating three years' experience in a finance role.
- Demonstrating achievement of work activities that are core and critical to the role of the management accountant.
- Demonstrating development of professional skills or behaviours that are essential to the management accountant.

You will need to record and have your PER supervisor verify three years' experience (full-time equivalent) in a finance role. You can be working in any industry or sector and size or type of organisation. You're likely to be working or have worked in one or more of the following areas:

- management accounting
- finance business partnering
- financial accounting
- professional services and consulting
- financial and management reporting
- banking
- treasury
- financial management

- financial planning and analysis
- performance management
- business intelligence and data analysis
- audit and assurance
- risk management
- taxation

Candidates and members hold a broad range of job titles so we don't prescribe a list of acceptable or expected job titles. We focus instead on what you do in your day-to-day work and ensure the work activities you're undertaking at this stage in your career are relevant to qualification as a management accountant and that you have developed the required professional skills and behaviours that are expected of our members.

To help you decide whether you have the right level of experience to apply for membership, your finance role should allow you to regularly demonstrate most or all of the following characteristics:

Technical	 Demonstrate strong, accurate technical accounting skills and use these to manage performance and/or implement and monitor strategy. Prepare financial and non-financial information to support decision-making. Provide trusted information and advice to others within and outside the finance function.
Business	 Demonstrate understanding of the business context and provide insight and recommendations which add value to the business.
People	 Build and maintain relationships within the finance function and within and outside the organisation. Work collaboratively to achieve objectives. Communicate complex technical information clearly and effectively to both accounting and non-accounting stakeholders.
Leadership	 Take ownership of own workload and/or designated projects and effectively manage your time and the time of others. Provide leadership to peers in the finance function and through business partnering with other areas of the business. Act as a role model.
Digital skills	 Use data and digital tools to analyse financial and non-financial information in order to manage performance and support decision-making. Able to adapt to increasingly digital work environments.
Ethics, integrity and professionalism	 Demonstrate the highest standards of conduct and professional competency. Apply ethics, integrity and professionalism to all work activities.

The ultimate test of whether you are gaining relevant experience will be to assess your experience to date against the required professional achievements and ensure that your work gives you, or has potential to give you, the experience to demonstrate and discuss your achievement of these.

Depending on your role, you may be ready to apply for CIMA[®] membership as soon as you meet the three years' experience requirement, or you may need a little longer to cover all the required professional achievements.

You don't need to be in full-time employment part-time experience still counts although you will need to calculate the full-time equivalent to record on your application. For more guidance on how to calculate the full-time equivalent of your part-time employment see **our guidance**.

Supporting your career development

Although the completion of the application will generally take place once you have acquired at least three years' relevant experience, you should regularly (we recommend every six to 12 months) refer to the practical experience requirements and reflect on whether your experience to date meets the requirements. Use the self-reflection questions and examples set out below to support your development discussions with your manager and identify opportunities for you to gain the required skills and experience if you're not achieving these through the course of your day-to-day work.

Regular self-reflection, together with feedback and discussions with your manager, ensure your career development is on track and supports you in acquiring all the relevant experience and skills/behaviours, leading to a successful application for CIMA membership at the earliest opportunity.

You can record experience and use examples of your professional achievements from before, during and after completing your examinations but you must make sure that you have a PER supervisor in place for details of any experience you submit or any examples you discuss. Maintain notes of good examples from your work experience so that you have these to refer to when you come to complete the application.

Choosing your PER supervisor

Your PER supervisor(s) perform a critical role in supporting you and helping you manage your career during this period of initial professional development. They also provide assurance to CIMA you have achieved the required experience and met the required standard.

All roles you use to demonstrate your professional achievements must be recorded and a PER supervisor stated for each. You should choose a PER supervisor for each professional achievement who will be able to verify that your submission is an accurate account of your experience and can assess that you have met the required standard. Ensure you gain permission from each PER supervisor before you submit their details.

Your PER supervisor must be someone you have worked for in the past or are currently working for. They must have direct knowledge of your work normally your line manager but any more senior person who has good oversight of your work can also act as supervisor. For more information on who can act as your PER supervisor, go to **our guidance**.

You may have just one PER supervisor or several, depending on the experience you are including in the application. For more guidance on how many PER supervisors you will need, see our example scenarios **here**.

Completing your PER application

The assessment of professional achievement and membership application requires you to:

- 1. Log in to your My Profile and click on your PER dashboard.
- 2. Complete the Employment history section and allocate your PER supervisor/s.
- **3.** Complete three of the five core work activities and allocate your PER supervisor/s.
- **4.** Complete all five skills and behaviours and allocate your PER supervisor/s.
- 5. Complete the Declaration.

You can save each section as a draft before you preview and submit for sign off. Your PER supervisor/s receive an email to review and sign off the section/s allocated.

Recording your employment history

A. Verified experience

Complete the section in the application with details of the verified work experience that you are submitting to meet the three-year experience requirement. You may have several roles to include or just one – there is no upper or lower limit.

You must record and have verified by a PER supervisor sufficient work experience to demonstrate that the overall requirement for three years' experience has been achieved but there is no need to apportion time to each professional achievement.

All roles you use to demonstrate the professional achievements must be recorded in this section and a PER supervisor stated for each role and then for each professional achievement. In some circumstances this may mean that you will need to record and have verified professional experience for a period longer than three years.

In this section you are also required to provide a brief overview of each of your roles and their responsibilities. You must also provide an overview of the organisation(s) you have worked for (the organisation's purpose, the products and/or services it offers, the sector and/or industry in which it operates, the size and structure of the organisation and a link to the organisation's website). This provides helpful context and background for your 'Situation, Task, Action and Result (STAR)' templates later in the assessment. Although your PER supervisor(s) will be very familiar with the organisation where you both work(ed) and the context of your work, your assessment will be subject to additional review and quality assurance checks by assessors. You should write as if you are addressing your application to a stranger to ensure that the information you include is understandable and accessible to someone outside of your organisation and that you provide a complete response to each section of the application.

There is a word count of 150 to 200 words each for description of your role and of the organisation. It is recommended you avoid bulleted lists and ensure that you use the full word count available to ensure that you give the full and clear description required.

Note: if your verified experience was gained more than 10 years ago and/or if there are recent, extended periods of not being employed in a finance role then we may contact you for more information about how you have remained professionally updated before making a decision on your application.

Recording professional achievement

The main sections of the assessment template allow you to demonstrate and discuss how you have met all of the required professional achievements, drawing on actual examples from your finance work experience to date.

'I can' statements, mirroring those used in the CGMA case study examinations, powerfully assert the professional achievements of a newly qualified member and provide a clear steer to both you and your employer on the professional experience that should be acquired and then recorded and discussed in the assessment. Additional guidance in the form of self-reflection questions is provided to support you and your employer in reflecting on your experience.

A standard format is provided to aid you in reflecting on your professional experience, choosing your examples and discussing your achievements. This format uses the 'STAR model' to help you structure your discussion. The STAR model is a well-established technique for supporting self-reflection and structuring responses to assessment questions that require you to demonstrate your professional achievements. The specific prompt questions mapped to this model aid you in your self-reflection and structure your responses, ensuring that you provide strong examples and the right level of detail to demonstrate that you have met the required professional achievements.

For each professional achievement, your discussion will take the following format:

1. Situation

Briefly outline the specific context of your example.

2. Task

Describe your specific role and responsibilities in the example situation.

3. Action

Describe the actions you took and how these actions demonstrated this skill/behaviour.

4. Result

How did you provide insight and influence the outcome of this situation? What was the impact for (business benefit to) the organisation?

This format assists you in going beyond a simple log or description of your experience and actions and supports you in discussing the impact of your actions and how your work adds value to your organisation.

You should aim for a word count of 500–750 words for each **STAR** template and carefully follow the prompt questions in the template to ensure that you are giving the right level of detail.

Record of professional achievement: core work activities

The core activities defined for the experience assessment are the types of work activities that you should be undertaking regularly in any relevant role at the end of the period of PER (around three years into your finance career). You might notice that these core activities correspond to the core activities assessed in the Management Case Study examination, providing a clear link to your studies and examinations and allowing you to demonstrate practical application of these in a real-world context.

The **STAR** template is provided for your discussion of each of the selected core activities (see below). Ensure that you follow this format and provide full responses to each of the prompt questions so that you provide all the information required to demonstrate your achievement.

Each core activity has several self-reflection questions to help you think about examples of the kind of activities that could be used and expanded upon to demonstrate professional achievement. You don't need to answer yes to each of the self-reflection questions. They are designed to assist you in reflecting on your personal experience and identifying relevant examples from your work achievements to write up in the **STAR** template.

Examples of work activities are provided (below) as a guide but are not exhaustive. There are many more ways in which you could demonstrate your achievement depending on your experience, role, sector and organisation.

You are required to demonstrate that you have achieved three out of the five core activities. Choose the three which are most appropriate for your experience to date and therefore for which you can choose and discuss strong examples from your recent experience.

Core Activity (3 of 5 required)	Recognising professional achievement Questions to aid self-reflection on the achievement of core activities	Example activity Indicative examples of experience that could be written up in the STAR template
A. I can evaluate opportunities to add value.	 Can you combine your finance and analysis skills and business insights to support the creation of business cases and decision-making for new projects, new products or services, pricing decisions, improvements to existing products or services, investments or acquisitions? provide analysis and insights that contribute to organisational decisions and success measures? use a range of data sources (financial and non-financial) to assist in the preparation of business cases? identify the internal and external factors which influence decision-making and provide data and analysis which allows these to be quantified? recognise the increasing prominence of the digital ecosystem and its impact on the business and consider it in my analysis and recommendations? recognise how business and operating models will need to develop in the context of the digital world and how the organisation will need to implement suitable business models that will create value for stakeholders? 	 Preparing the investment appraisal to support the business case for a new product launch. Undertaking data analysis (financial and non-financial) to inform the organisation's leadership's decision on whether to establish an additional contact centre. Identifying the impact on the organisation's business model now that online sales outnumber in-store sales and contributing to the selection and implementation of a new model.
B. I can implement strategic decisions.	 Can you manage a strategic decision through to action, translating high-level objectives into actions or tactics for you and others as required? work as part of a project team and lead projects or aspects of projects as required and as relevant to your role and position in the organisation? take ownership of your designated areas of responsibility and effectively manage deliverables? contribute to planning or project management, advising on or applying suitable tools and techniques to manage, monitor and evaluate implementation of a strategic decision? provide insight and analysis which supports decisions around the tools and techniques to manage performance, risk and uncertainty in projects? provide advice and analysis which feeds into financing decisions? 	 Working as part of a project team planning the launch of a new product. Representing the finance department on a project to select and implement a new ERP system. Advising on appropriate sources of finance for a project.

Core activity (3 of 5 required)	Recognising professional achievement Questions to aid self-reflection on the achievement of core activities	Example activity Indicative examples of experience that could be written up in the STAR template
C. I can manage performance and costs to aid value creation.	 Can you implement and use the techniques, structures, data analysis and reporting required for managing performance and costs and creating value for the organisation and its stakeholders? support the leaders in the business, such as responsibility centre managers, to measure, analyse and report on performance and support managers by providing insights which aid achieving their unit's targets? select and apply appropriate cost management and cost transformation, quality management, value management and risk quantification techniques? work with the business owners and managers to enable them to make informed decisions and implement solutions to enhance or create value through managing or reducing costs, improving profitability, finding process efficiencies, improving quality or quantifying and managing risk? provide insights which contribute to operational performance and organisational effectiveness by supporting employee engagement, empowerment and alignment which drive and enhance individual and team performance? 	 Assisting in the preparation of the annual budgets, forecasting and analysing variances against this every month. Providing analysis on the performance of a profit centre and supporting the manager of the profit centre in readjusting targets when performance is below projections. Identifying and reporting on costs and revenues relating to the pricing strategy for a new product. Note: the example you choose must relate to measuring organisation performance and not employee/HR performance management.
D. I can measure performance.	 Can you select and apply appropriate tools and techniques to measure and report on financial and operational performance? compile, interpret and analyse financial and non-financial data and share findings with colleagues and managers within the business to provide information on current performance which aids operational decisions? provide data and insights that enable the organisation to monitor progress against targets and informs recommendations for improvements? understand the implications of the data you use and the analysis you produce along with the accounting treatments the organisation chooses? Can you explain these to colleagues and stakeholders? understand how your work contributes to the published financial statements and other reports for shareholders and other stakeholders and the implications and uses of this reporting? 	 Having responsibility for compiling and circulating monthly reporting on performance against KPIs. Providing commentary to senior management which adds detail and insight as to why there is a variance against budget. Assisting in the preparation of year-end statutory accounts. Designing reports or dashboards which draw from several data sources to provide and present data to non-financial managers within the business.

Core activity (3 of 5 required)	Recognising professional achievement Questions to aid self-reflection on the achievement of core activities	Example activity Indicative examples of experience that could be written up in the STAR template
E. I can manage internal and external stakeholders.	 Can you support, collaborate and communicate with colleagues in the finance department, within other areas of the business and/or external partners and stakeholders? build strong working relationships, dealing with people with professionalism, understanding and sensitivity? work effectively with internal stakeholders (both finance and non-finance staff) and external stakeholders? respect and appreciate alternative viewpoints, motivations and goals and, where these are in conflict, recognise the need for difficult conversations and negotiation to resolve the issue and find the best outcome for the organisation? combine your technical knowledge and skills with your business insight, to provide trusted and credible insights and recommendations? support the business deliverables and decision-making along with contributing to the reporting, assurance and accountability required by our shareholders or other stakeholders? 	 Preparing or contributing to the financial statements and other reporting for external stakeholders. Dealing sensitively with an internal department whose targets and profits are affected by transfer pricing issues associated with internal trading. Maintaining relationships with external partners such as the organisation's customers, suppliers, external advisors, auditors, bankers and/or investors.

Record of professional achievement: skills and behaviours

Aside from technical competence, qualified management accountants have developed professional skills and behaviours which support and enable the achievement of work activities. These skills and behaviours are critical to the finance professional at all stages of their career and will continue to be used and developed throughout your professional development.

Five essential skills or behaviours have been identified as critical for initial professional development. As for the core work activities above, each skill or behaviour has several self-reflection questions to help you think about examples of the kind of activities that could be used and expanded upon to demonstrate professional achievement. You don't need to answer yes to each of the self-reflection questions. They are designed to assist you in reflecting on your personal experience and identifying relevant examples from your work achievements to write up in the **STAR** template. Examples of work activities are provided as a guide but are not exhaustive. There are many more ways in which you could demonstrate your achievement depending on your experience, role, sector and organisation.

The same **STAR** template is provided for your discussion of each of the selected skills/behaviours (see below). Ensure that you follow this format and provide full responses to each of the prompt questions so that you provide all the information required to demonstrate your achievement. You are required to demonstrate that you have achieved all five skills/behaviours.

Skill/behaviour (5 of 5 required)	Recognising professional achievement Questions to aid self-reflection on the achievement of professional skills/behaviours	Example activity Indicative examples of experience that could be written up in the STAR template
i. Ethics and integrity	 Can you comply with the CIMA code of ethics and your own organisation's code of conduct and policies? keep up to date with any changes in legislation or other professional standards? identify and professionally respond to ethical issues consider issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion in all areas of your work and treat all stakeholders with honesty, respect and consideration? have the courage of your convictions and stand up for what you believe is right in the face of differing viewpoints or challenges? defend your recommendations or decisions and the data and thinking underpinning these? 	 Retaining independence when dealing with a conflict of interest arising from a project. Responding to a colleague who challenges the financial modelling you have prepared and/or the sources of data used. Discovering undue pressure from management to influence metrics in key performance indicators when setting budgets. Detecting potential errors or misstatements in the preparation of statutory accounts.
ii. Leadership	 Can you take responsibility for specific projects, producing realistic plans that are supported by key stakeholders? effectively allocate and manage your own time and other resources to ensure the successful completion of projects according to agreed plans? lead by example, motivating other members of the project team to deliver high-quality work on time and within budget? 	 Acting as a buddy or role model for a member of the team who has just started their accounting studies. Mentoring new staff following a major company reorganisation or takeover. Prioritising staff allocation in developing a new ABC costing system. Providing guidance on the prioritisation of tasks in organising an inventory count.
iii. Growth mindset	 Can you take ownership of your professional development, developing an awareness of your strengths and weaknesses and planning for self-development within the role? reflect upon areas for professional improvement and identify appropriate development activities to fill these gaps? seek and reflect upon feedback on performance from colleagues at all levels of the organisation? adopt a continuous improvement approach in your work and show evidence of learning from professional experiences, for example, by changing your approach in response to constructive criticism or lessons learned in a previous project or piece of work? show a willingness to operate outside of your comfort zone and engage with new experiences? 	 Identifying data visualisation technology skills as a personal development need, finding and undertaking a training course and then applying the learning points in my day-to-day work. Using personal lessons learned and feedback from business partners during the budgeting process to improve the process next time around. Seeking feedback from a range of stakeholders on a draft report and acting on constructive criticism to produce the final report. Recognising that there is limited opportunity for me to develop leadership skills in my current role and working with my manager to identify a project where I can take on some leadership responsibility. Note: the example you choose must relate to your personal growth, learning and development and not that of your organisation.

Skill/behaviour (5 of 5 required)	Recognising professional achievement Questions to aid self-reflection on the achievement of professional skills/behaviours	Example activity Indicative examples of experience that could be written up in the STAR template
iv. Professional scepticism	 Can you question the appropriateness and validity of financial and non-financial data used to make management decisions? proactively seek an explanation of inconsistencies identified in such data? apply professional judgement to determine whether inaccurate data is the result of error or fraud? 	 Considering the appropriateness of data such as the discount rate applied in fair value assessment or investment appraisal model. Investigating unusual or unexpected variances Questioning the rationale for a sales target which appears to be unachievable.
v. Communication	 Can you communicate in a clearly and appropriately with colleagues at different levels of the organisation? communicate with external stakeholders in a way consistent with organisational values? select the most appropriate mode of communication for the message and the target audience? 	 Setting up arrangements to facilitate project team communication. Involvement in preparation of and dissemination of financial information following a new product launch. Presenting outputs of a project to colleagues or senior staff. Developing a presentation on an investment appraisal project to non-financial management. Explaining ratios and performance indicators to a non-financial management team.

Assessing achievement

The following criteria, used in conjunction with the detailed core activity and skill/behaviour descriptors above, will be used to assess whether you have achieved the required standard. PER supervisors and

assessors will assess your submission using these criteria so you should use them as a checklist as you finalise your responses to the assessment questions (STAR template) to ensure that you provide sufficient information to be judged as meeting the standard for each professional achievement.

Not achieved Achieved Unsuitable situation chosen: the task is too small Suitable situation chosen: the task is significant and challenging enough to demonstrate or does not provide enough scope to demonstrate professional achievement. professional achievement. · Task does not demonstrate the core activity or Task clearly demonstrates the core activity or skill/behaviour assigned. skill/behaviour assigned. · Description of task missing or too brief. Task clearly described. · Specific individual role and responsibilities within Specific individual role and responsibilities the task not described. within the task clearly described. · Inadequate description of the actions taken to Individual actions taken in completing the task complete the task or team, rather than individual, clearly described. actions described. Good discussion of the result of own actions. Inadequate discussion of the result of own actions. Demonstrates clear insight into how actions Little or no insight into how actions impact business impact business outcomes and add value to outcomes and add value to the organisation. the organisation.

Submitting your application

Once you have completed all required sections and submitted each for sign off, your PER supervisor/s will receive an email to review their allocated sections.

Once all sections are signed off by your PER supervisor/s you will receive an email to confirm your application will be reviewed by CIMA.

More information, resources and FAQs can be found **here**.

Alternatively, contact us here.

aicpa-cima.com

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