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# TRAINEE ACCOUNTANTS PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE FRAMEWORK (TAPEF) SUPERVISORS HANDBOOK

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **ABOUT ICPAK**

The Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK) is the statutory body of Accountants established in 1978 and draws its mandate from the Accountants Act. No 15 of 2008. The Institute is mandated to develop and regulate the Accountancy profession in Kenya. It is a member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), the global accountancy umbrella body.

### **Vision**

A world class professional Accountancy Institute.

### **Mission**

To develop and promote internationally recognized accountancy profession that upholds public interest through effective regulation, research and innovation.

### **Our Core Values**

**Credibility:** We resolve to promote high ethical standards in accounting practice and reinforce our mandate of championing public interest.

**Professionalism:** We maintain a high level of knowledge, skills and standards as we provide excellent services to our members and stakeholders.

**Accountability:** We are obliged to account for our activities, accept responsibility for our actions and conduct our operations in a transparent manner.

### **OUR MANDATE**

- a) Promote standards of professional competence and practice amongst members of the Institute.
- b) Promote research into the subjects of accountancy and finance and related matters, and the publication of books, periodicals, journals and articles in connection therewith.
- c) Promote the international recognition of the Institute.
- d) To advise the Minister of finance on matters relating to financial accountability in all sectors of the economy.
- e) Advise the Examinations Board on matters relating to examinations standards and policies.
- f) To carry out any other functions prescribed for it under any of the other provisions of this Act or any other written law and;
- g) To do anything incidental or conducive to the performance of any of the preceding functions.

## **ABOUT kasneb**

Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinations Board (kasneb) was established by the Government of Kenya on 24 July 1969. The establishment and operations of kasneb are governed by the following main Acts:

- a) The Accountants Act, No. 15 of 2008 (which repealed the Accountants Act, Cap 531 of 1977).
- b) The Certified Public Secretaries of Kenya Act, Cap 534 of 1988.
- c) The Investment and Financial Analysts Act, No. 13 of 2015.

The mandate of kasneb includes development of syllabuses, conducting professional, diploma and certificate examinations and certification of candidates in accountancy, finance, credit, governance and management, information technology and related disciplines, and the promotion of its qualifications nationally and internationally.

## **INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS (IESs)**

The umbrella body for professional accountants globally is the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). ICPAK is a member body of IFAC. One of the boards under IFAC is the International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB). IAESB has issued certain standards that prescribe the pre-qualification and post-qualification requirements for aspiring and qualified accountants. These standards are called International Education Standards (IESs). Adherence to these standards is a precondition for the international recognition of accountants.

### **I. ABOUT TRAINEE ACCOUNTANTS PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE FRAMEWORK (TAPEF)**

TAPEF spells out practical experience requirements that all aspiring accountants must undergo as part of ICPAK membership requirement. This is backed by **IES 5: Initial Professional Development – Practical Experience**. This IES prescribes the practical experience required of aspiring professional accountants by the end of Initial Professional Development (IPD). IFAC member bodies are required to ensure sufficient practical experience to enable aspiring professional accountants to demonstrate that they have gained the (a) technical competence, (b) professional skills, and (c) professional values, ethics, and attitudes necessary for performing a role of a professional accountant. The member bodies are also required to ensure the practical experience is recorded in a consistent form, supported by verifiable evidence and subjected to a periodic review by a workplace training supervisor.

## II. PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS – THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The competency framework is ICPAK's indicator of effective performance, and sets the minimum standard of work a trainee accountant is expected to achieve and demonstrate in a work place. It basically describes the nature of work activity to be carried out and the values and attitudes trainee accountants are expected to demonstrate before they are ready to become Members of ICPAK.

### Minimum experience

**Start date** – a trainee accountant is eligible to commence the practical experience requirements as soon as he/she has registered for his/her first CPA exam paper with kasneb.

**Minimum duration** – to become a full CPA (K) member, a trainee accountant must complete 450 practical work experience days which are normally expected to comprise of 3 years of full time work. This excludes exam holidays, training courses, illness and office administration. Each day constitutes 7 hours.

For persons working on a part time basis, the experience required remains at 450 days. It is therefore expected that a person working only half a day, would take up to 6 years to obtain the required experience.

Relevant experience in an accounting or finance role as an intern would also qualify for purposes of meeting the 450 days of practical experience provided the other criteria have been met.

**End date** – the practical experience of 450 days must have been obtained within 6 years of the date of the last examination pass date.

## III. SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

The practical experience gained must be relevant in the accountancy or finance related roles. It is expected that significant, if not all, of the work days required to meet the TAPEF requirements would be spent on activities and tasks related to accounting, finance, audit and assurance, or in other related technical areas such as taxation and management accounting. Internships and placements are generally relevant experience provided records are kept in a consistent and verifiable manner.

## IV. THE WORKPLACE TRAINING SUPERVISOR

A workplace supervisor oversees TAPEF development at the workplace while reviewing the progress.

Experience only qualifies if there is a qualified workplace training supervisor able to monitor, review and sign-off the full 3 years of practical experience obtained. The training

supervisor at the workplace must be at a minimum be a qualified accountant and a full member of an IFAC registered accountancy body (e.g. ICPAK, ICPAU, NBAA, ICAEW, ACCA etc.) and such membership must be held throughout the experience period being signed-off. ICPAK will also from time to time issue separate guidelines relating to accreditation of such supervisors. In an ideal set-up, the supervisor should be working in the same organisation or entity as the trainee accountant. However, where a trainee accountant's direct supervisor is not a qualified accountant and a member of a professional institute, and no other person within the entity is qualified and available to be a supervisor, the trainee is required to seek a supervisor from among qualified members from the region, town or local branch of the Institute. Trainee accountants may seek further guidance and direction from ICPAK in this regard through the TAPEF portal on ICPAK's website.

A trainee accountant need not have one single workplace training supervisor that covers the full 450 days of experience. Indeed, this may not be possible as the trainee accountant may be obtaining such experience from many different employments. If each employment period is covered by a separate qualified training supervisor, the requirement for the 450 days will be cumulatively met.

Because of the above requirement, self-employed experience will not meet the minimum requirements.

### **Responsibilities and Support from the Workplace Training Supervisor**

As a workplace supervisor, you will:

- A.** Hold an informal session with the trainee accountant upon recruitment to cover the following matters:
  - i. Ensure the trainee accountant understands the work they will be undertaking in the workplace and helping the trainee accountant identify the competencies the work being undertaken will achieve.
  - ii. Assist the trainee accountant plan the experience required to meet the competency requirement for example job rotations, undertaking various assignments within a department.
  - iii. Set up the process under which the supervision will take place. This will involve ensuring the trainee understands the workplace's process of the training and supervision and will cover details of information required for the formal sessions, records to be kept ready, evaluations etc.

- B.** Hold formal sessions with the trainee accountant no further apart than 6 months and carry out the following:
- i. A review of the recorded experience and corroborating the contents of the records to evidence of work done for example timesheets, work summaries, on job evaluation forms etc.
  - ii. Critically review whether the experience gained by the trainee during the review period meets the competency of the framework.
  - iii. Test the trainee on the practical experience gained using means such as questions and answers, laying out scenarios and obtaining the trainees views on the same etc.
  - iv. Discuss the experience gained and progress of the trainee. Also understand the challenges faced by the trainee in achieving/making progress on acquiring the competencies in the framework.
  - v. Establish the competency objectives to be met for the next six months.
  - vi. Signing off against the competencies met if achieved to their satisfaction.
- C.** Holding subsequent formal meetings to review progress against the objectives set for the six months preceding the current formal meeting.

## **V. BENEFITS ACCRUING TO THE SUPERVISOR**

Members of ICPAK and other IFAC registered bodies are encouraged to participate in this framework to mentor the next generation of professional Accountants. As a consideration from the Institute, supervisors will earn 7 CPD Hours per annum prorated. This is in addition to any other benefits that ICPAK will consider from time to time.

## **VI. COMPETENCY OBJECTIVES/ LEARNING AREAS**

A trainee accountant is required to meet a minimum of 7 competencies in total, of which 4 competencies are compulsory and 3 elective competencies out of 9. As a supervisor, you will be tasked with guiding the trainee accountant to ensure that the competencies are achieved. The competencies are as below:

**a. Compulsory Competencies**

<b>Competency Category</b>	<b>Competency Objective</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>1. Professional ethics and values</b>	Professional judgement and scepticism	The application of a questioning mind.. Evaluation of various facts and circumstances to arrive at a reasoned and professional judgement/conclusion.
	Ethical principles	Application of ethical standards and situations where they may be applicable.  Apply working knowledge of the core principles of integrity, objectivity and professional behaviour.
	Governance, risk management and internal controls	Explain the link between risks (financial and non-financial) and the related internal control objectives including evaluation of the effectiveness of such controls in day to day work as a professional accountant.  Demonstrate awareness of the laws and regulations applicable to different entities and those that apply to professional accountants  Demonstrate an understanding of the interaction between ethics, laws and regulation and public interest in the context of financial reporting
<b>2. Professional Skills</b>	Leadership	Demonstrate application of consultative skills to minimize or resolve conflict, solve problems, and maximize opportunities.  Demonstrate the ability to apply people management skills to motivate and develop others.  Demonstrate leadership skills to influence others to work towards organizational goals and delegation skills to deliver assignments.
	Communication	Demonstrate clear and concise communication ability when presenting, discussing and reporting in formal and informal situations, both in writing and orally.
	Managerial	Demonstrate the ability to manage time and

		<p>resources to achieve assignment objectives.</p> <p>Demonstrate the review of own work and that of others to determine whether it complies with the organization's quality standards.</p> <p>Improving financial and non-financial departmental and staff performance.</p>
	Information technology	<p>Use of IT solutions such as spreadsheets, word processing, presentations and e-mail, including use of data analytic tools to evaluate and interpret data.</p> <p>Use of the internet as a source of information.</p> <p>Assess IT risks and management thereof.</p>
	Business strategy	<p>Evaluation of information from various sources, application of reasoning and detailed analysis to create solutions for business problems.</p> <p>Evaluate different business options/opportunities and recommend specific courses of action based on financial and non-financial evaluation.</p> <p>Demonstrate the anticipation challenges and plan potential solutions.</p>
<b>3. Financial Accounting</b>	Accounting skills	<p>Obtain source information for the preparation of financial records.</p> <p>Apply accounting principles to transactions and other events.</p> <p>Perform financial controls such as reconciliations of bank accounts, subsidiary ledgers to nominal ledger and third party documents and prepare and review journal entries.</p>
<b>4. Financial Reporting</b>	Preparing and demonstrating an understanding of financial statements prepared under IFRS/IFRS for SMEs/other framework for external reporting purposes	<p>Apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) or other relevant standards</p> <p>Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used to prepare financial statements.</p> <p>Prepare financial statements, including consolidated financial.</p>

It is expected that the above compulsory competencies will be demonstrated as having been met in each of the 6 months review cycles that are included within the overall 450 days of experience or 3 years.

**b. Elective competencies**

The elective competencies focus on technical areas such as management accounting, financial management, taxation and audit and assurance. These comprise areas of specialization that a trainee accountant wishes to further in their career.

A minimum of 3 out of the following 9 competencies need to be achieved:

	<b>Competency Objective</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1.	Financial Analysis	Interpret financial statements and related disclosures including application of ratio analysis. Interpret reports that include non-financial data, for example, sustainability reports and integrated reports.
2	Management Accounting	Prepare reports to support management decision making, including reports that focus on planning and budgeting, cost management, quality control, performance measurement, and benchmarking. Apply techniques to support management decision making, including product costing, variance analysis, inventory management, and budgeting and forecasting. Apply appropriate quantitative techniques to analyze cost behaviour and the drivers of costs. Analyze financial and non-financial data to provide relevant information for management decision making. Evaluate the performance of products and business segments.
3	Financial Planning	Prepare regular budgets and forecasts including variance analysis and reforecasting Analyze an organization’s cash flow and working capital requirements. Analyze the current and future financial position of an organization, using techniques including ratio analysis, trend analysis, and cash flow analysis.
4	Financial and transaction evaluation	Compare the various sources of financing available to an organization, including bank financing, financial instruments, and bond, equity and treasury markets.

		Analyze the current and future financial position of an organization, using techniques including ratio analysis, trend analysis, and cash flow analysis. Apply capital budgeting techniques in the evaluation of capital investment decisions. Explain income, asset-based, and market valuation approaches used for investment decisions, business planning, and long-term financial management.
5	Taxation- tax laws and regulations	Demonstrate understanding of the tax laws and regulations. Explain taxation compliance and filing requirements.
6	Taxation – compliance	Compute taxes payable and prepare the necessary returns and submissions. Prepare direct and indirect tax calculations for individuals and organizations.
7	Tax strategy	Explain the differences between tax planning, tax avoidance, and tax evasion. Perform forecasts for tax implications of transactions and develop strategies for tax planning and overall strategy.
8	Audit and assurance - financial audits	Describe the objectives and stages involved in performing an audit of financial statements. Apply relevant auditing standards (for example, International Standards on Auditing), and applicable laws and regulations to an audit of financial statements. Assess the risks of material misstatement in the financial statements and consider the impact on the audit strategy. Apply quantitative and qualitative methods that are used in audit engagements. Explain the key elements of assurance engagements and applicable standards that are relevant to such engagements.
9	Audit and assurance- reporting	Prepare draft auditor reporting for audit and assurance engagements. Prepare auditor reporting to those charged with governance. Deliver key audit findings to management and those charged with governance.

The selected elective competencies will be considered to have been met as and when the necessary work experience has been obtained, recorded and signed off.

### **c. Competencies for trainees wishing to acquire audit practicing certificates**

For trainees wishing to obtain audit practising certificates after obtaining ICPAK membership, they must have achieved the following competencies within the 3 electives;

- i. Competency objective 8 - Apply relevant auditing standards to the audit of financial statements.
- ii. Competency objective 9 - Evaluate and report on the audit both in terms of external reporting and reporting to those charged with governance.

## **VII. RECORDING PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE TRAINING**

Practical experience must be recorded in a consistent and verifiable manner. Once an individual is eligible for TAPEF, the experience will be recorded online and hosted on an ICPAK database. Trainee accountants will need to create an account online on the ICPAK website and log in credentials will be availed to them.

The account will remain accessible by logging in anytime the trainee account needs to document/edit experience being acquired and logging out once done.

## **VIII. REVIEWING AND APPROVAL OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE RECORDED**

As a supervisor, one of your roles will be to review the experience being documented by a trainee accountant placed under your guidance. Your decision will be guided by the competencies to be achieved both compulsory and elective. A supervisor will need to set up a formal meeting with the trainee accountant before commencement of recording the experience.

This meeting is important since it sets out the competencies to be achieved in the next six months, duties to be allocated to the trainee accountant to facilitate achievement of the competencies and general ground rules. A trainee accountant will be documenting experience gained on a continuous basis, as and when it is acquired. This will then be forwarded to the supervisor for review and approval once a trainee accountant is convinced that the work done matches the relating competencies.

To be able to review and approve documented experience, a supervisor, who is essentially a member of ICPAK will log in into his/her online account on ICPAK Website and will be able to see a tab on “**TAPEF**”. This tab will show all trainee accountants mapped to a supervisor and documented experience submitted if any. If there is documented experience submitted, a supervisor will go through it and make a decision (either approve or decline). The decision can be accompanied by comments back to the trainee accountant. This will go on until the first six months have lapsed.

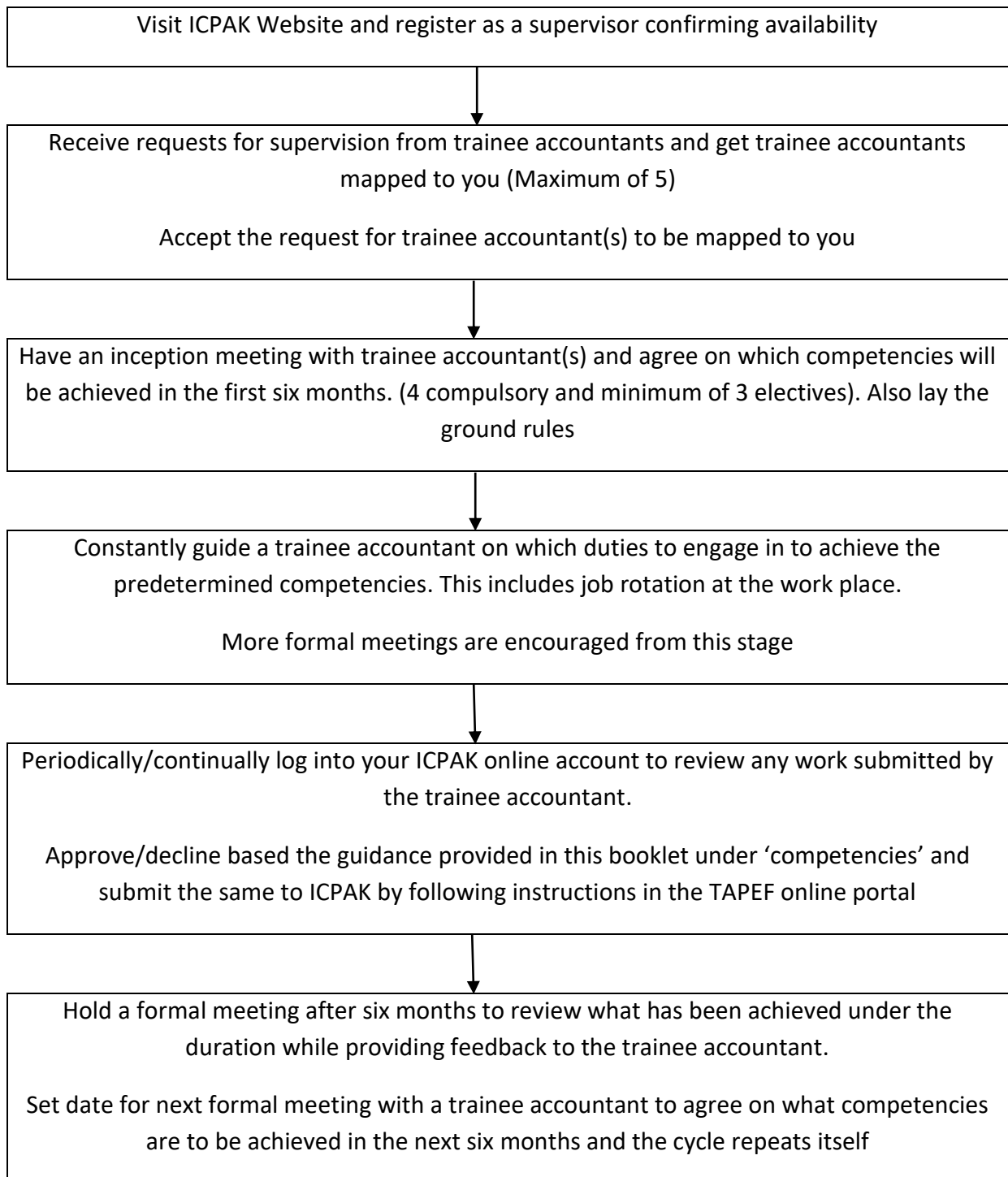
Upon lapse of six months, a supervisor and trainee accountant will need a formal face to face meeting to close out what has been done under the duration. A supervisor can use this chance to give feedback to a trainee accountant as to their performance but this does not stop the two from meeting at any other time during the duration. A decline of approval to work done will be accompanied by explanation to guide a trainee accountant on how best to go about it in the next attempt. After the meeting, the trainee and supervisor will sign off a hard copy declaration which will thereafter be scanned and emailed to ICPAK by the supervisor.

## **IX. TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

The new TAPEF framework as set out above requires recording of practical experience at intervals of not more than 6 months including workplace training supervisor sign-offs. ICPAK recognises that certain trainee accountants will have already obtained work experience without formal recording of the same on PET forms. For such applicants, transitional provisions will apply as follows:

- Trainee accountants submitting application for ICPAK membership on or before launch of TAPEF – TAPEF experience need not to be completed but all other application requirements including letters of employer recommendation and a summary of experience achieved covering 3 years of employment need to be submitted.
- Trainee accountants submitting application for ICPAK membership 1 year after launch of TAPEF will need to satisfy a minimum of 150 days of practical experience recorded and will need to have met the required competency objectives within that period. Other application requirements including letters of employer recommendation and a summary of experience achieved covering 3 years of employment need to be submitted.
- Trainee accountants submitting application for ICPAK membership 2 years after launch of TAPEF will need to satisfy a minimum of 300 days of practical experience recorded and will need to have met the required competency objectives within that period. Other application requirements including letters of employer recommendation and a summary of experience achieved covering 3 years of employment need to be submitted.
- Trainee accountants submitting application for ICPAK membership 3 years after launch of TAPEF will need to satisfy all the requirements of the TAPEF framework (450 days of practical experience fully recorded) including all other membership application requirement.

## X. STEP BY STEP APPROACH



## **XI. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. Who is eligible to join TAPEF as a Supervisor?**

A: A member of ICPAK in good standing or a member of an IFAC registered body. Eligible supervisors are requested to officially register on ICPAK website to confirm availability for mentorship.

### **2. Who is running this experience framework?**

A: The framework is being run jointly between ICPAK and kasneb

### **3. What is the duration of the experience framework?**

A: 3 years for a trainee accountant working on a full-time basis and 6 years working on a part time basis.

### **4. How many trainee accountants can one supervise at ago?**

A: A maximum of five at any given time

### **5. Do the trainee accountants have to be working at my place of work?**

A: Having trainee accountants at your place of work is highly encouraged for close supervision, guidance and allocation of duties that match set competencies to be achieved.

However, in certain cases where a trainee accountant finds him/herself in a place or work where there is no supervisor, a supervisor in that region/town/branch can volunteer to mentor offsite.

### **6. How is the experience obtained by trainee accountants?**

A: Experience is obtained through attachment, internship, employment (both full time and part time) and volunteer work. However, self-employment does not count under this framework.

Duties assigned should be commensurate to the competencies to be achieved.

### **7. What happens if a trainee accountant is changing jobs/internship/attachment?**

A: If one is changing place of experience, one is required to clear with the previous supervisor and have the experience signed off as per the last day of work. On joining the new organization, one will need to get a new supervisor at the new place of work and continue with the experience. This therefore allows a trainee accountant to have multiple supervisors. Job rotation is also encouraged to allow acquisition of different practical experience in different departments.

#### **8. What is the implication of not undergoing the framework?**

A: This framework forms part of ICPAK membership requirement. Upon launch, applicants for ICPAK membership will need to demonstrate having undergone the framework as per the transitional provisions.

#### **XII. FEEDBACK, MORE INQUIRIES**

For feedback or further inquiries, reach us at [tapef@icpak.com](mailto:tapef@icpak.com)

#### **Contact Information:**

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