

# Qualifications 2022 Key themes



This infographic highlights key themes across the AAT accounting qualifications.

When used to support teaching and curriculum planning, it must **not** be used in isolation of the associated qualification specification.

Key

UNDERSTANDING

KNOWLEDGE

SKILLS

## Level 2 topic areas include

## Level 3 topic areas include

## Level 4 topic areas include

### TECHNOLOGY

The importance of data and information security, including cyber security.

How accounting software is based on manual bookkeeping principles; how using accounting software differs from manual bookkeeping systems.

The use of digital technologies for financial data collection, processing and disseminating information i.e. fintech, artificial intelligence (AI), automation.

Use of tools to support cost calculations.

The use of PESTLE for analysing technological factors in the business's external environment.

The impact of emerging technologies on accounting system/ role of the accountant/finance function: machine learning, block chain, electronic filing/signing of documents, data analytics, automation, AI.

How technological developments have increased outsourcing and offshoring which has impacted business development.

Key features of cloud accounting, including its benefits and limitations for organisations.

The use and benefits of accounting software in relation to VAT and payroll.

Principles of data protection and the impact of data protection breaches on the individual and businesses.

The importance of maintaining information security, and cyber security to address cyber risks (including risks to data and operations posed by cyber attacks).

The use of spreadsheet techniques and accounting software in financial accounting and management accounting processes.

How visualisation improves financial understanding by managers and clients.

How technological developments may improve accounting systems.

How technological developments may impact the ways businesses collect and interpret data: cloud accounting, data analytics, AI, machine learning.

Requirements for data security, including risks to data and operation caused by cyber attacks.

### ETHICS

The five fundamental principles of ethics.

The importance of acting ethically, including accounting technician's compliance with AAT's *Code of Professional Ethics*.

Actions accounting technicians may have to take to act ethically.

The relevance of the ethical code for professional accountants.

Ethical conflicts, ethical conflict resolution and reporting unethical behaviour.

The importance of reporting suspected money laundering in accordance with regulations.

Recognising threats to fundamental principles.

How accounting systems used by organisations should: encourage ethical principles and practice, and support sustainability principles and practice.

The importance of ethical conduct and sustainable practices within the accounting function.

The importance of ethical information and sustainability practices to stakeholders.

Key

UNDERSTANDING

KNOWLEDGE

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Level 2 topic areas include

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SUSTAINABILITY

- The objective of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- The role of finance in CSR reporting.
- How social and ethical responsibilities change over time.
- The responsibility of businesses with respect to sustainability and the environment.

- The importance of sustainability, including the three aspects of sustainable performance.
- The use of PESTLE for analysing sustainability factors in the business's external environment.
- The importance of operating sustainably in relation to products and services, colleagues and the supply chain.
- The importance of long-term responsible management and use of resources.
- The importance of the accountant's public interest duty to protect society as a whole and the organisation's sustainability.

- The importance of ethical conduct and sustainable practices within the accounting function.
- The importance of ethical information and sustainability practices to stakeholders.

COMMUNICATION

- Principles of effective communication.
- How to choose information from sources of information for specific purposes.
- Produce work in appropriate formats i.e. business letters/emails; recognise the impact and consequences of ineffective or inappropriate communication.

- Principles used to determine the appropriate method of communication; attributes of good quality information and information requirements in business organisations.
- Type, purpose, characteristics of information at operational, managerial and strategic levels within an organisation.
- Characteristics of big data: volume, velocity, variety, veracity; the sources, benefits and limitations in use of big data.
- The importance of being able to select and visualise information in different formats for different purposes e.g. images, charts, matrices, graphs.
- How accounting software uses dashboards to communicate to non-technical stakeholders.
- Interpret visual information to indicate relationships and trends.

- How to present information to financial and non-financial managers.
- Communicate key findings of analysis and evaluation of information to support decision making within an organisation.
- Make recommendations, including supporting rationale, to management based upon analysis and findings.