

FIJI INSTITUTE OF ACCOUNTANTS

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE MENTORED PROGRAMME

To advance to full chartered accountant status you must successfully complete the 20 required academic units of a university Bachelor degree programme, the 3 compulsory core units of the CPA Programme and demonstrate a minimum three years of practical experience of which at least two years are mentored practical experience in finance and or accounting.

The Practical Experience Mentored Programme (The Mentor Programme) divides the accounting profession into six main areas of work:

- Auditing;
- External reporting;
- Insolvency and reconstructions;
- Management accounting;
- Taxation; and
- Treasury

These areas of work list the practical skills accountants are expected to develop within the workplace.

Designed to run parallel to your employment, the Mentor Programme requires you, as the trainee, to collect workplace evidence that will demonstrate to your mentor that you are competent in at least three of the workplace skills listed in the Mentor Programme, one in depth.

The Mentor Programme will serve as a useful tool for setting up your career management strategy, as it encourages you to identify your career goals, strengths, values and areas that may need development. It also offers acceleration to full chartered accountant status, access to the mentor's experience, skills and insight and is a transferable programme, if you should change jobs or relocate.

The Fiji Institute of Accountants encourages you to nominate your own mentor; a list of authorised mentors can be obtained from the FIA Office. It is strongly recommended that your mentor should be your direct manager or supervisor (provided that he or she is an authorised mentor). Please be aware that if you choose a mentor from outside of your workplace, you may not be able to show your mentor all your workplace evidence.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

How do I register in the Programme?

You will need to complete a Mentoring Agreement form (available from the FIA Office) with your selected mentor and lodge a copy with the Institute.

Can I participate in the Programme if I am studying full time, unemployed or on extended leave?

No. The Mentor Programme has been designed to provide you, as a Provisional Member, with a comprehensive framework for your work experience. Provisional Members who are not currently in the workforce cannot register, since they cannot obtain the requisite experience to which this Programme relates.

Can I register into the Mentor Programme before I enrol for the three core units of the CPA Programme?

Yes. The two programmes may run in parallel.

What is the role of the trainee?

The major tasks expected of a Provisional Member who registers as a trainee are to:

- Find and nominate a mentor;
- Initiate the first meeting with the mentor;
- Establish relationship goals and expectations and a competency development plan
- Show initiative and commitment to the process;
- Complete all administrative requirements;
- Collate evidence of meetings and discussions; and
- Collect evidence of work skills gained.

What is the role of the mentor?

The major tasks of a mentor are to:

- Act as a sounding board and provider of information;
- Share knowledge and experiences with the trainee;
- Encourage and support the trainee's progress to chartered accountant status; and
- Complete a final report on the trainee's performance.

The mentor does not:

- Coordinate the administrative requirements of the programme;
- Drive the relationship (that is the role of the trainee); and
- Act as a tutor for the required units of the CPA Programme.

What qualifications does a mentor require?

Mentors must:

Be current registered chartered accountant members of the Fiji Institute of Accountants with at least four years of acceptable practical experience after becoming a chartered accountant;

Have previous experience in supervision, managing or mentoring; and

Be available for a minimum of five one-hour consultations (face-to-face or by telephone or email) per six month period.

What can I discuss with my mentor?

In addition to the points mentioned above, a mentor's role is to assist with career guidance and with professional development. Some high-level discussion may be undertaken regarding the technicalities of the profession. However, a mentor is under no obligation to assist you, as trainee, with day-to-day job functions or to act as a tutor for the required units of the CPA Programme.

How much time will I need to spend with my mentor?

A minimum requirement is 10 hours per annum. Naturally, you can communicate more often if you desire and if your mentor is available.

Do I have to retain the same mentor for the full two years?

No. The minimum time the FIA requires mentor pairs to commit to is 6 months. However if your relationship is helpful and rewarding and both parties agree, it would be advisable to maintain your mentor relationship for longer periods.

What if I already have extensive work experience, even if it was not mentored?

The FIA requires all applicants for admission to full chartered accountant status to have completed a minimum three years of acceptable practical experience, of which one year should be of general practical experience and the other two years should be focussed on gaining practical experience in the specified main areas of work experience under the Mentor Programme. Regardless of its length, any practical experience gained by an applicant prior to completing the minimum 20 required academic units of a university Bachelor degree programme will only be counted as qualifying towards the required one year of general practical experience.