

FNSACC408 Work effectively in the accounting and bookkeeping industry

This book supports FNSACC408 Work effectively in the accounting and bookkeeping industry in the Financial Services Training Package.

ISBN 978-1-925291-64-3

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Special thanks

Kay Bretreger

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Published by Software Publications Pty Ltd

Head office – Sydney
Unit 3
25 Gibbes Street
Chatswood NSW 2067

www.softwarepublications.com.au

Published and printed in Australia

FNSACC408 Work effectively in the accounting and bookkeeping industry

Application

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to work autonomously and in teams to complete work activities relating to the provision of accounting and bookkeeping services.

It applies to individuals who occupy roles with some responsibility and use a range of research and organisational techniques to establish and carry out their work requirements in the accounting industry.

Work functions in the occupational areas where this unit may be used are subject to regulatory requirements. Refer to the FNS Financial Services Training Package Companion Volume Implementation Guide or the relevant regulator for specific guidance on regulatory requirements.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>	Page reference
1. Develop professional working relationships	1.1 Clarify business needs and expectations of work to be done through clear communication with key stakeholders	5–10
	1.2 Determine roles and responsibilities of various members of the accounting and tax profession according to business needs	10–13
	1.3 Identify activities that fall outside own role and responsibilities, and identify networks of individuals able to carry out those activities	13–15
	1.4 Refer business owner to networks for advice and services where applicable	16–18
	1.5 Request feedback on range, type and quality of service to be provided and act on feedback, where applicable	19–23
	1.6 Identify and use ethical principles and practices in own role and responsibilities	24–27
2. Identify compliance requirements and support materials	2.1 Obtain access to publications and software tools designed to assist in carrying out own work activities	31–32
	2.2 Research legislative, statutory, regulatory and industry requirements for carrying out own work activities	28–30
3. Set up and maintain systems to meet compliance requirements	3.1 Develop systems to support user needs	33–36
	3.2 Develop instructions and guidelines for carrying out daily activities according to compliance requirements	36–39
	3.3 Review and adapt systems as necessary on a regular basis	39–40

ELEMENT <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>	Page reference
4. Work autonomously or in a team to complete work activities	4.1 Determine tasks to be done and identify required conditions to work autonomously or in team environment	41–42
	4.2 Plan work to manage resources, time and priorities	43–47
	4.3 Provide feedback to team members to encourage, value and reward individual and team efforts, and contributions	48–52
	4.4 Support team to identify and resolve problems that impede its performance	53–56
	4.5 Adapt to changes in technology and work organisation in a timely manner	57–60
5. Develop and maintain own competency	5.1 Identify and review own professional development needs and goals on regular basis	61–62
	5.2 Clarify and comply with competency, authorisation and licensing requirements	63
	5.3 Seek professional development opportunities that reflect own needs and goals in agreed timeframe	63–65

Foundation Skills

This section describes those language, literacy and numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.

Skill	Description	Page reference
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates strategies to maintain and enhance own knowledge and skills 	Pages 41–60
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates prior knowledge with new information from a range of relatively complex sources to establish and review required information and extend understanding 	Throughout learning guide
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compiles logically sequenced texts using appropriate text type and support materials to convey detailed information and clear instructions that are amended or improved as required 	Pages 36–40
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates effectively in interactions, clearly articulating information and using questioning and active listening to clarify understanding and elicit feedback 	Throughout learning guide
Navigate the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies and implements legislative, statutory, regulatory and industry requirements of own role 	Pages 10–13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains knowledge required to meet expectations of own role 	Pages 28–57
Interact with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds rapport to establish effective working relationships 	Throughout learning guide
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapts own communication style to show respect for the values, beliefs, and cultural expectations of others 	Throughout learning guide
Get the work done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organises work according to defined requirements, using some analytical processes and taking responsibility for decisions 	Throughout learning guide
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops systems and support documentation to achieve required outcomes 	Pages 36–40
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses the main features and functions of digital tools to complete work tasks 	Throughout learning guide

Assessment for this Unit

Assessment for this Unit includes:

- submitting completed exercises
- participating in group discussions.

Assessment requirements v3.0

Performance Evidence

Evidence of the ability to:	Page reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• establish and maintain effective relationships with clients and colleagues	Pages 5–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• research and identify organisational policies and procedures relevant to own role	Pages 10–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop systems and guidelines for work procedures that comply with legislative requirements	Pages 33–40
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• analyse, evaluate and organise information required for own role	Pages 28–30
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• effectively plan work and contribute to team environment, taking into account constraints and available resources	Pages 41–60
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify and evaluate opportunities for own professional development.	Pages 61–65

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate the following knowledge to effectively complete the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria of this unit, and to manage tasks and reasonably foreseeable contingencies in the context of the work role.	Page reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avenues for identifying other professionals in the accounting and bookkeeping industry	Pages 13–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requirements of accounting and bookkeeping industry codes of practice	Pages 26–26
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policies and procedures required for own role in the accounting and bookkeeping industry	Pages 10–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statutory, legislative and regulatory requirements for documenting accounting procedures	Pages 36–39

Chapter 1: Professional working relationships

What are business needs?

The nature and extent of business needs will vary from business to business depending on for example:

- business culture and ethics
- ownership and management
- purpose and goals
- size
- type and industry.

Business needs are likely to change as the business passes through the different stages in its life cycle. For example, a business that has had a period of stable sales can suddenly experience significant growth.

Business owners will have at least a broad picture of their business needs and expectations. Their expertise, personality and structure of the business will determine how much detail these needs and expectations will be documented. They are likely to rely on the expertise of others to determine how these needs and expectations can be achieved.

Generally business needs will focus on:

- accurate accounting records
- building and maintaining relationships with suppliers and customers/clients
- compliance with all legal requirements
- defined purpose and goals
- maintaining and managing a workforce
- maintaining liquidity
- managing costs
- protecting assets
- creating wealth for owners.

Having good knowledge and understanding of business needs will make it easier when clarifying the needs and expectations of your role. It will demonstrate expertise and professionalism.

Internal controls

Small businesses are the most vulnerable to fraud because they often do not have effective internal controls. A small business owner could also paralyse their business trying to cover every possible contingency or fraudulent activity. By removing opportunity and motivation for fraud and theft, and putting systems in place to discourage errors, identify mistakes and anomalies quickly, it is possible to discourage fraud in the first place.

Small businesses are known for having weak internal controls. Owners/managers and their accounting staff must be attentive to the concept and issues of internal controls to maximise the business potential and minimise the risk of fraud, error and loss. If the internal controls fail, the bookkeeper or accountant can take corrective action quickly to minimise losses.

Internal controls are methods or procedures adopted in a business to:

- safeguard its assets
- ensure financial information is accurate and reliable
- ensure compliance with all financial and operational requirements
- generally assist in achieving business objectives.

Examples of internal controls

Control	Example
Document control	Sequential numbering of documents (e.g. cheques)
Batch totalling or reconciliation	Totals added and cross-checked
Independent check	Recheck totals, review spreadsheets
Automated controls	Limit inputs to system, check dates
Validation checks	Check amounts on invoices are signed off
Segregation of duties	Receipting separate from banking cash
Exception routines	Spot checks
Physical controls	Limited access to equipment, petty cash
Rotation of duties	Petty cash, receipting
Approval authority levels	Purchasing authority levels for staff
Assignment of responsibility	Clear lines of responsibility
Management supervision, monitoring and review	Regular checks, review of personnel
Employee knowledge and skills	Staff must be fully trained in their job
Compulsory annual leave	Ensuring all staff take their annual leave gives another staff member a chance to review what the person has been doing

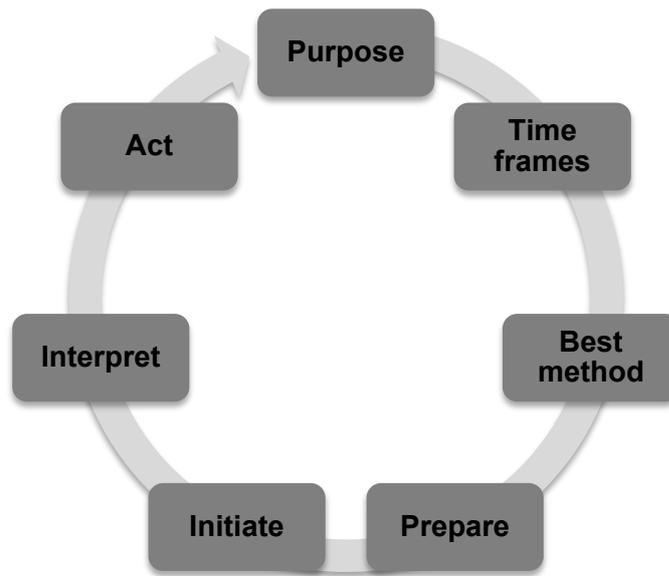
Some internal control processes may be used in combination. For example, when handling large amounts of cash, the control may be a combination of daily cash counts and reconciliation with segregation of duties and physical controls on access to cash. Video monitoring may also be useful and added to the control measures. ¹

¹ Retrieved October 2018 from www.cpaaustralia.com.au/~media/corporate/allfiles/document/professional-resources/business/internal-controls-for-small-business.pdf?la=en

Seeking feedback

Receiving feedback can be a little stressful and that makes many people hesitate to ask for it. The more often you seek feedback, the less stressful it will be to initiate a feedback conversation and to hear the comments. This does not mean just fishing for compliments; rather you must really listen to the feedback and be prepared to modify your behaviour or work methods.

To foster improvement in your performance, encourage your supervisor, business owner and other people in your network to provide transparent, open and truthful feedback. The following flowchart shows a method to take responsibility for seeking constructive feedback and to use it to improve the way you work.



Purpose

It is important to establish and focus on your purpose when you are seeking feedback. Be specific about what you want feedback on and from whom. This will help to establish the best way to collect the feedback.

Consider time frames

When seeking feedback, it is important to take into consideration time frames. For feedback to be of use it needs to be sought in a timely manner. You need to:

- allow sufficient time for stakeholders to consider the matter
- allow sufficient time to interpret the feedback you have received
- ask for feedback while the information is still fresh in the minds of the stakeholders
- seek the feedback before action has to be taken or it is too late to act on the feedback received.

Chapter 2: Compliance requirements and support

Legislative, statutory, regulatory and industry requirements

At times when carrying out work activities or to keep up-to-date with legislative changes, it may be necessary for you to conduct research. Depending on the topic and extent of research required it could be very time consuming. By planning your research, it will be more efficient and research more effective.

Recommendations for conducting research

Throughout the process, it may be necessary to go back to an earlier stage.

Identify	Define the research purpose – what do you need to find out and what do you want to use it for? Identify stakeholders and their needs. Record what you already know about the topic. List key words and ideas that might be useful when researching.
Plan	Determine time frames – when is the information required? Identify known sources. Identify resources available. Determine method(s) of gathering information. Consider budget constraints. Consider how you plan to collate the information gathered. Consider how you are going to store and retrieve the information.
Research	Be aware of the source of the information and the reliability of that source. Use reputable websites such as government bodies or recognised professional organisation. Check the date and ensure information is still current. Assess the relevance of the information – always keep your purpose in mind. Record ideas and source details as you go. Be aware of distractions – during your research it is likely you will come across useful information not specifically relating to the current research purpose. Make a reference list so that you can come back to it later.

Assessment evidence guide

Element <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	Performance Criteria <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>	How is evidence gathered?
1. Develop professional working relationships	1.1 Clarify business needs and expectations of work to be done through clear communication with key stakeholders	Exercise 1 to Exercise 7
	1.2 Determine roles and responsibilities of various members of the accounting and tax profession according to business needs	Exercise 8 to Exercise 10
	1.3 Identify activities that fall outside own role and responsibilities, and identify networks of individuals able to carry out those activities	Exercise 11 to Exercise 20
	1.4 Refer business owner to networks for advice and services where applicable	Exercise 15 to Exercise 20
	1.5 Request feedback on range, type and quality of service to be provided and act on feedback, where applicable	Exercise 21 to Exercise 23
	1.6 Identify and use ethical principles and practices in own role and responsibilities	Exercise 24 to Exercise 26
2. Identify compliance requirements and support materials	2.1 Obtain access to publications and software tools designed to assist in carrying out own work activities	Exercise 31 to Exercise 34
	2.2 Research legislative, statutory, regulatory and industry requirements for carrying out own work activities	Exercise 27 to Exercise 30
3. Set up and maintain systems to meet compliance requirements	3.1 Develop systems to support user needs	Exercise 35 and Exercise 36
	3.2 Develop instructions and guidelines for carrying out daily activities according to compliance requirements	Exercise 39
	3.3 Review and adapt systems as necessary on a regular basis	Exercise 37 and Exercise 38
4. Work autonomously or in a team to complete work activities	4.1 Determine tasks to be done and identify required conditions to work autonomously or in team environment	Exercise 40 and Exercise 41
	4.2 Plan work to manage resources, time and priorities	Exercise 42 to Exercise 44
	4.3 Provide feedback to team members to encourage, value and reward individual and team efforts, and contributions	Exercise 45 and Exercise 46
	4.4 Support team to identify and resolve problems that impede its performance	Exercise 47 and Exercise 48

Element <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	Performance Criteria <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>	How is evidence gathered?
	4.5 Adapt to changes in technology and work organisation in a timely manner	Exercise 49
5. Develop and maintain own competency	5.1 Identify and review own professional development needs and goals on regular basis	Exercise 50 and Exercise 51
	5.2 Clarify and comply with competency, authorisation and licensing requirements	Exercise 50 and Exercise 51
	5.3 Seek professional development opportunities that reflect own needs and goals in agreed timeframe	Exercise 50 and Exercise 51

Assessment requirements v1.0

Performance evidence

Evidence of the ability to:	How is evidence gathered?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish and maintain effective relationships with clients and colleagues 	Exercise 1 to Exercise 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> research and identify organisational policies and procedures relevant to own role 	Exercise 8 to Exercise 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop systems and guidelines for work procedures that comply with legislative requirements 	Exercise 27 to Exercise 39
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse, evaluate and organise information required for own role 	Exercise 31 to Exercise 34
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively plan work and contribute to team environment, taking into account constraints and available resources 	Exercise 45 to Exercise 49
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and evaluate opportunities for own professional development. 	Exercise 50 and Exercise 51

Knowledge Evidence

The candidate must be able to demonstrate the following knowledge to effectively complete the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria of this unit, and to manage tasks and reasonably foreseeable contingencies in the context of the work role.	How is evidence gathered?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avenues for identifying other professionals in the accounting and bookkeeping industry 	Exercise 15 to Exercise 19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements of accounting and bookkeeping industry codes of practice 	Exercise 24 to Exercise 26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures required for own role in the accounting and bookkeeping industry 	Exercise 11 to Exercise 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory, legislative and regulatory requirements for documenting accounting procedures 	Exercise 37