



**PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE
IN EDUCATION
OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS**

June 2008

Qualification and Market Access Working Party

FOREWORD

Practical experience is an essential part in the qualification requirements of professional accountants. The International Education Standard N° 5 (IES 5) states “practical experience gained by performing the work of professional accountants, in addition to the acquisition of knowledge through professional accounting education programs is considered necessary before candidates can present themselves to the public as professional accountants” (para. 4). In particular, the EU Directive on Statutory Audit requires trainees to complete a minimum of three years’ practical experience in order to ensure the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.

Practical experience as described in IES 5 is more than just performing accountants’ activities. The experience has a goal which is a full qualification in a total autonomy as a professional accountant. This implies monitoring and control by the professional body and/or regulatory authority competent for licensing the accountant.

FEE decided to survey the situation in Europe in order to assess the level of harmonisation and the areas where important divergences exist. This information is relevant to further develop the organisation of practical experience in the Member States.

The survey is based on a questionnaire developed by the IFAC International Accounting Education Standards Board (IAESB). FEE is grateful to IAESB for allowing the use of the questionnaire. However FEE’s objective is not to monitor compliance with IESs. Answers are used as reference material; not all questions have been reviewed and commented.

The FEE Council thanks the FEE Education Subgroup, chaired by Mr. Wim Moleveld, for preparing the survey and fully endorses its conclusion.

Jacques Potdevin
President

OFFICIAL TEXTS REFERRED TO

- Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005, on the recognition of professional qualifications (*Official Journal L.255 30 September 2005*). Henceforth “RPQ Directive”.
- Directive 2006/43/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on statutory audit of annual accounts and consolidated accounts, and amending Council Directives 78/660/EEC and 83/349/EEC, and, repealing Council Directive 84/253/EEC (*Official Journal L.157 of 9 June 2006*). Henceforth “Statutory Audit Directive”.
- International Accounting Education Standards Board, “International Education Standard n° 5 Practical Experience Requirements” (October 2003).
- International Accounting Education Standards Board, “International Education Standard n° 8 Competence Requirements for Audit Professionals” (July 2006).
- International Accounting Education Standards Board, “International Education Practice Statement n° 3 Practical Experience Requirements – Initial Professional Development for Professional Accountants” (December 2007).

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1. SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

The report relates to the situation in FEE Member Bodies at the end of 2006. Thirty eight national professional bodies of accountants in 30 countries provided an answer to the questionnaire sent by FEE:

Austria	Institut Österreichischer Wirtschaftsprüfer Kammer der Wirtschaftstreuhänder
Belgium	Institut des Experts-Comptables et des Conseils Fiscaux Institut des Réviseurs d'Entreprises
Bulgaria	Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Bulgaria
Cyprus	Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Cyprus
Czech Republic	Chamber of Auditors of the Czech Republic
Denmark	Foreningen af Statsautoriserede Revisorer
Estonia	Estonian Board of Auditors
Finland	KHT – yhdistys
France	Ordre des Experts Comptables Compagnie Nationale des Commissaires aux Comptes
Germany	Institut der Wirtschaftsprüfer
Greece	Soma Orkoton Elegton Logiston
Hungary	Chamber of Hungarian Auditors
Ireland	Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland
Israel	Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Israel
Italy ¹	Consiglio Nazionale dei Dottori Commercialisti Consiglio Nazionale dei Ragionieri e Periti Commerciali
Latvia	Latvian Association of Certified Auditors
Lithuania	Lithuanian Chamber of Auditors
Luxembourg	Institut des Réviseurs d'Entreprises
Malta	The Malta Institute of Accountants
The Netherlands	Koninklijk Nederlands Instituut van Registeraccountants
Norway	Den norske Revisorforening
Poland	National Chamber of Statutory Auditors
Portugal	Ordem dos Revisores Oficiais de Contas
Romania	The Body of Expert and Licensed Accountants of Romania
Slovakia	Slovak Chamber of Auditors
Slovenia	The Slovenian Institute of Auditors
Spain	Instituto de Censores Jurados de Cuentas de España
Sweden	FAR SRS
Switzerland	Treuhand-Kammer
United Kingdom	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

It is relevant to point out at the outset that the responsibility of licensing accountants is not always in the hands of the professional organisations mentioned above.

¹ By the time the paper went to printing, the two Italian professional bodies merged into a single body, the Consiglio Nazionale dei Dottori Commercialisti e degli Esperti Contabile.

2. DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

2.1. Requirements in IES Pronouncements and EU Directives

2.1.1. Definition of Practical Experience in IES Pronouncements

“Practical experience, gained by performing the work of professional accountants, in addition to the acquisition of knowledge through professional accounting education programs, is considered necessary before candidates can present themselves to the public as professional accountants” (IES 5 – 4).

The IES framework defines practical experience as follows: “Work experience, undertaken by a trainee or a qualified professional accountant that is relevant to the work of professional accountants. The program of experience enables the individuals’ development of professional competence (including professional behaviour) in the work place and provides a means whereby individuals can demonstrate the achievement of professional competence in the work place.”

The framework provides further comments on the definition: “Practical experience refers to the on-the-job execution of tasks that are relevant to the field of accountancy. The practical experience part of the qualifying process is intended to facilitate the development and direct application of professional knowledge; professional skills; and professional values, ethics, and attitudes. Ultimately, it is through practical experience that trainees will demonstrate their competence to perform the roles of professional accountants. Practical experience also refers to the ongoing experience of professional accountants in the accountancy field” (IES Framework – Glossary of terms).

It is relevant to notice the difference made in International Education Standards (IES) between practical experience and experience which is defined as follows:

“Experience” is a particular type of education, which focuses on how the individual does the job. Experience is usually a mix of instruction and practice. It is experience related, and thus has a more practical or applied element than other forms of education. Experience may be “on the job” (i.e., while the trainee is performing real tasks in the work place) or “off the job” (i.e., which takes place while the trainee is not actually performing work)” (IES Framework – 36).

Trainees need to gain practical experience in roles considered appropriate by the professional body to which they are applying (IES 5 - 15). However, as far as professional auditors are concerned, IES 8 is more specific. Paragraph 54 of this standard states “A substantial proportion of the period of practical experience should be in the area of audit of historical financial information”.

2.1.2. Definition of Practical Experience in EU Directives

Article 2 (e) of the Directive 2005/36/EC of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications refers to a period of “*professional experience*” as a condition to be a member of a regulated profession. The expression ‘regulated education and experience’ means any experience which is specifically geared to the pursuit of a given profession and which comprises a course or courses complemented, where appropriate, by professional experience, or probationary or professional practice.

Similarly, Article 10 of the Directive 2006/43/EC of 17 May 2006 on Statutory Audit requires “*practical experience*” to be part of requirements to be qualified as a statutory auditor in EU Member

States: “ In order to ensure the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, a test of which is included in the examination, a trainee shall complete a minimum of three years' practical experience in, inter alia, the auditing of annual accounts, consolidated accounts or similar financial statements.”

In the Directive recognition of professional qualifications, “*professional experience*” has a different meaning. It refers to the actual and lawful pursuit of a professional activity which has enabled the candidate to acquire sufficient experience (see Art.2 (f) RPQ Directive). For the application of this Directive, professional experience is a solution to allow free movement of professionals in the internal market, when a specific profession (or activity) is not regulated in the Member State of origin. In the same way, Article 11 of the Statutory Audit Directive deals with “qualification through long-term *practical experience*” which applies when the candidate does not fulfil all the requirements which would apply in the normal curriculum.

Although the expressions used in the IESs and EU Directives might look somewhat confusing, the concept is clear. This paper discusses the period of practical experience or experience which is part of the prequalification programme. The IES terminology “practical experience” will be used.

It is relevant to observe that the Directive on Statutory Audit requires explicitly that the practical experience has to be obtained, at least partly in auditing. This corresponds with the above mentioned paragraph 54 of IES 8.

2.2. Summary of Responses to the FEE Survey

2.2.1. Observation on the Scope of Activities

In its paper on “Internal Market for Services and the Accountancy Profession: Qualifications and Recognition”, published in November 2005, FEE underlined that the implementation of qualification regulations in the EU raises very complex issues in relation to the accountancy profession compared to other professions. This additional complexity arises for three key reasons: firstly, the very wide range of activities undertaken by professional accountants across EU Member States; secondly, variations in Member States’ rules regarding the pursuit of different activities by an individual member of the profession or firm; and thirdly, the existence of different regulatory approaches and market access rules at Member State level in relation to the provision of non-statutory audit services.

Other recent FEE studies, specifically, the FEE studies are: *Admission to the Profession of Accountant and Auditor - A Comparative Study* (December 2002) and *Provision of Accountancy, Audit and Related Services in Europe - A Survey on Market Access Rules* (December 2005), emphasises the difference in the scope of services that can be provided by accountants in Europe.

One of the main differences relates to the possibility to be or to remain a member of the professional body which delivered the initial qualification, when the professional decides to work in business, in industry or in government. Another important difference relates to the existence in some Member States of specialised bodies registering exclusively professionals entitled to practice statutory audit.

These differences in scope obviously impact the implementation of standards or regulatory instruments, including provisions related to practical experience.

2.2.2. Requirement to Obtain Practical Experience

All FEE Member Bodies participating in the survey confirmed that trainees, candidates or students must satisfy requirements related to practical work experience before being a fully qualified professional accountant.

As explained above (2.2.1.), FEE Member Bodies are differently organised. Some of them only accept as members, auditors or accountants in public practice which means self-employed professionals or professionals working within an accounting firm. Others have a broader membership extending to accountants working in business and industry or in the public sector. In all cases, practical experience is considered to be an essential part of the curriculum and it would not be possible to qualify without having a sufficient period of practical experience in a professional environment.

All Member Bodies licensing statutory auditors also comply with the practical experience requirement which exists in EU regulation since 1984.

2.2.3 Objective of Practical Experience

Monitoring key learning or developments goals that trainees are expected to reach, for example the ability to apply accounting knowledge, skills and attitudes in a business environment, would be more effective if these learning developments goals were defined at the outset of the work experience. They should normally be stated as competences that could be assessed at a later stage during or after the period of practical experience. As suggested by IFAC in IEPS 3, professional bodies may develop “a framework for practical experience appropriate for their environment that directs mentors, employers and trainees to the areas in which trainees are expected to gain practical experience” (IEPS 3 - para.54).

Not all Member Bodies have set up clear objectives for practical experience. Eighteen Member Bodies report that development goals and learning are very general at the beginning of the period of practical experience but acknowledges that these definitions are defined on a such as “gained practical experience necessary for the performance of the audit services”.

2.2.4. Area of Work Experience

Practical experience provides candidates with an additional background to their programme of theoretical study. It is obviously the capacity to bring theory into practice but it can be more than that. As developed by paragraph 17 of IES 5, practical experience provides a professional environment in which trainees can develop competence by enhancing their understanding of organisations, of work relationships and how businesses work. Trainees have the opportunity to relate accounting work to other business functions and activities, to become aware of the environment in which services are provided to develop appropriate professional values, ethics and attitude in practical real life situations. Also the practical experience gives young professionals the opportunity to work at progressive levels of responsibility.

Trainees need to gain practical experience in roles considered appropriate by the professional body to which they are applying (IES 5, para. 15). Since the period of practical experience may have different objectives, according to the Member Body concerned, but also to the outcome of the period of practical experience, it is difficult to interpret the results of the survey. However, for the Member Bodies who are competent to licence statutory auditors, reference can be made to Article 10 of Directive 2006/43/EC concerning statutory audit which requires a minimum of three years practical

experience in, inter alia, the audit of annual accounts, consolidated accounts or similar financial statements.

Nineteen Member Bodies specified that a minimum requirement is placed on audit work. The minimum requirement can be defined in the number of hours worked or in a percentage of the annual activity of the trainee.

Other Member Bodies either have no specific requirement or accept a broad range of activities, the proportion between these activities depending on the environment of practical experience.

In all Member Bodies surveyed the period of practical experience can be carried out in an accounting firm. A majority of 23 Member Bodies also allow getting experience in a different environment. Depending on the organisation of the profession in the countries surveyed, the period of practical experience can be achieved in business, government or education.

It is also important to point out that the Statutory Audit Directive requires that “at least two thirds of such practical experience shall be completed with a statutory auditor or audit firm approved in any Member State.” This requirement only applies to professionals who wish to be approved and registered as statutory auditors.

All FEE Member Bodies consider that the knowledge, skills and attitude that are expected to be developed are in alignment with those specified in IES 2, 3 and 4. The same unanimity does not exist concerning IES 8 for different reasons:

- In a number of cases, the requirements to be licensed as an auditor are not a competence belonging to the Member Body.
- In other cases, some improvements are expected as a result of the recently approved Directive on Statutory Audit which has to be transposed in Member States by the end of June 2008.
- Eventually in other cases, the members of the professional institutes are not automatically allowed to practice statutory audit, which is considered as a specific area of work for professionals, requiring an additional educational programme and practical experience.

2.3. Further Comments

IES 5 acknowledges the overall goal of measuring outcomes of the initial education: “Simply spending the amount of time necessary to meet the practical experience requirement is not sufficient. Trainees need to demonstrate the competences achieved.” (IES 5, para. 12).

In the survey, a majority of positive answers were received to the question “are the learning/development goals stated as competences?” Although most systems applied in Europe include some input-based requirements such as a minimum number of hours or year practical experience, the ultimate objective is that trainees demonstrate achieved competences.

As mentioned above (2.2.1), the scope of services provided by accountants in Europe varies widely. Since IES 5, para. 15 states that “trainees need to gain practical experience in roles considered appropriate by the professional body to which they are applying”, a difficult issue to be addressed by professional bodies is the scope of competences to be included in the initial qualification requirements, compared to those which can be part of continuing professional education.

3. STRUCTURE OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

3.1. Requirements in IES 5 and EU Directives

3.1.1. IES 5

“The period of practical experience in performing the work of professional accountants should be part of the prequalification program. This period should be long enough and intensive enough to permit candidates to demonstrate they have gained the professional knowledge, professional skills, and professional values, ethics and attitudes required for performing their work with professional competence and for continuing to grow throughout their careers” (IES 5 – 10).

“The period of practical experience should be a minimum of three years. A period of relevant graduate (beyond undergraduate, e.g., masters) professional education with a strong element of practical accounting application may contribute no more than 12 months to the practical experience requirement” (IES 11).

Different ways to interpret the minimum of three year are suggested in IEPS 3 – para. 23:

- setting requirements for trainees to gain experience across a range of specific work related areas during the minimum three-year period;
- setting requirements for trainees to gain experience in work-related areas directly related to their intended professional specialisation(s) during this minimum three year period;
- setting requirements for trainees to complete a set number of hours or days over a defined period to meet the minimum three-year requirement;
- setting requirements for trainees to complete a set number of hours or a percentage of the overall period of practical experience in specific work-related areas during the minimum three-year period; and
- setting requirements for the minimum three-year period to make it more suitable to the background and intended career path of the trainee.

3.1.2. EU Directives

Article 11 of the Directive of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications defines 5 levels of education for the purpose of free movement of professionals across the European Union. Requirements at a given level of education often include both a diploma and practical experience (professional experience). For example, the two upper levels are defined as follows:

- “(d) a diploma certifying successful completion of experience at post-secondary level of at least three and not more than four years' duration, or of an equivalent duration on a part-time basis, at a university or establishment of higher education or another establishment providing the same level of experience, *as well as the professional experience which may be required in addition to that post-secondary course*;
- (e) a diploma certifying that the holder has successfully completed a post-secondary course of at least four years' duration, or of an equivalent duration on a part-time basis, at a university or establishment of higher education or another establishment of equivalent level *and, where appropriate, that he has successfully completed the professional experience required in addition to the post-secondary course.*”

It is noticeable that the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications does not provide any indication on the length or content of the required practical experience.

The Directive of 17 May 2006 on Statutory Audit is more precise in determining the length of the period of practical experience which needs to be a minimum of three years' and the purpose of the experience which needs to cover, inter alia, the auditing of annual accounts, consolidated accounts or similar financial statements.

Article 6 of the Directive has been carefully drafted to avoid any preference or exclusion in the organisation or the sequence of acquiring theoretical knowledge and practical experience. However, it does not specify the length of the practical experience in case of part-time employment. Similarly, no indication is given on the period of validity between the formal end of the period of practical experience and the moment when the candidate effectively starts practising the profession.

3.2. Summary of Responses to the FEE Survey

3.2.1. Organisation of the Practical Experience and the Academic Part of Education

The FEE survey questioned the possibility to pursue the theoretical part of education at a time the candidate already started to work. In other words can the theoretical conditions of the education be fulfilled sequentially or concurrently with work experience? The answers reveal a great variety of situations.

IES 5 acknowledges that “No single combination of education and experience required for preparation for qualification as a professional accountant is used throughout the world.” Article 6 of the EU Directive on Statutory Audit is also fully flexible on the combination of theoretical education and practical experience.

Seventeen Member Bodies answered that the theoretical part of the education had to be satisfied before starting the practical experience.

Eleven Member Bodies answered that the candidates have the possibility to follow two different routes, the first being to satisfy academic requirements first and then the practical experience and, the second being to satisfy concurrently the requirements on practical experience and academic education.

Nine Member Bodies answered that the practical experience and the theoretical part of the education have to be satisfied concurrently.

3.2.2 Time and Hours of the Practical Experience

IES 5 is based on the principle that the period should be long and intensive enough to permit candidates to demonstrate that they have gained the required professional knowledge, professional skills and professional values, ethics and attitudes and 3 years as a minimum. The survey reveals a broad consistency in the length of required practical work experience among FEE Member Bodies.

In 25 out of 30 countries, 3 years is the usual period of practical experience which would only be modified in specific circumstances. In 3 countries, the usual period is longer than 3 years. In two countries it only needs to be 2 years.

It is interesting to observe that in some countries (Germany, Bulgaria) the length of the practical experience will depend on the academic degree initially obtained by the candidate.

Concerning the number of hours of the practical experience, six Member Bodies require the experience to be carried out as a full time assignment. In all other cases, a part-time is allowed. In 12 Countries, the part-time requires a minimum of hours per week or per year or in total. However, the minimum number of hours varies from country to country. The minimum is 700 hours a year. The maximum is equivalent to a full time but spread over a longer period of time.

3.2.3. *Work Programme*

IES 5 states that “The program of practical experience needs to be designed and implemented to meet the experience requirements set by the professional body. It also needs to be efficient and cost effective for the employer”. Furthermore, bodies whose members are eligible for an audit license at the point of qualification need to ensure that appropriate audit experience is acquired during the pre-qualification period².

On the question “Which parties participate in determining the work programme to fulfil the experience requirements?” respondents provided a wide range of answers. The survey envisaged the possibility that the Member Body, government or regulators, the mentor, the employer or the trainee himself would participate in determining the work programme. Obviously different parties can cooperate in the definition of the work programme.

In 19 cases, the answer was that the Member Body itself is part of the determination of the work programme.

In 16 cases, government and regulators are involved, which is always applicable in countries where the competence to license professionals belongs to an oversight body separate from the institute.

In 20 cases, the mentor and the employer also participate in determining the work programme.

In 18 answers, the trainee appears to participate in determining his/her own work programme to fulfil the experience requirement.

3.2.4. *Period of Validity*

The question was raised to know whether the period of practical experience needs to be renewed after a certain period of time if the candidate is not effectively practise the profession. The question is not directly addressed in IES 5.

In the majority of cases (21) no rule on the period of validity has been fixed by the Member Body. In 9 cases, the validity of the experience would fall after a number of years (usually 5 years, in some cases 3).

² See in particular paragraphs 22 and 24 of IES 5

4. MONITORING SYSTEMS

4.1. *Requirements in IES 5 and EU Directives*

As clearly established by the International Education Standards as well as in the European Directive on Statutory Audit, practical experience must be adequately monitored by the registering body. IAESB issued in December 2007 practice statement IEPS-3 which provides further detailed guidance on monitoring and control of practical experience requirements.

The Member Body and/or regulatory authority should ensure that the practical experience candidates have gained is acceptable. A record of the practical experience gained should be reviewed periodically by the mentor (IES 5, para. 18-19). The record of experience needs to be regularly compared with the overall programme established for the trainee to ensure that the requirements set by the professional body or regulatory authority, are being met. If progress within the programme does not match the anticipated development rate, the situation needs to be reviewed to discover the reasons why and what can be done to improve it. This regular comparison will provide another opportunity for all parties to comment on the practical experience and contribute to the trainee's future development (IES 5, para. 25).

Article 7 of the Directive on Statutory Audit provides that the examination of professional competence shall *guarantee* the necessary level of theoretical knowledge of subjects relevant to Statutory Audit and the ability to apply such knowledge in practice.

4.2. *Summary of Responses to the FEE Survey*

4.2.1. *Evidence of Competence Acquired*

The survey raised the question of how the learning or development goal achievements are assessed by the Member Bodies. In many cases, the answer was that the assessment will normally result from examinations that could take place at different times in the qualification framework. However, this method of assessment will often be supplemented by other means at different stages in the period of practical experience. For instance, the assessment can also be made by the professional body, on the basis of the report of the mentor or the employer.

As proposed by IES 5, trainees will have to maintain a record of practical experience allowing progress evaluations to be made on a regular basis. As will be developed later in this paper, the assessment can also be made by the professional body, on the basis of the report of the mentor or the employer.

Member Bodies which do not require learning or development goals to be fixed at the outset of the period of practical experience, do not provide further guidance on how the assessment of weaknesses in the learning or developments goals should be corrected.

Consequently, the only possible impact of such assessment could then be an encouragement to formally improve the planning of the practical experience over the remaining part of the period of practical experience.

4.2.2. *Comparison between Work Programme and Record of Experience*

To be effective, the record of experience should be compared regularly with the overall programme established for the trainee to ensure that the trainee is progressing in compliance with the requirements set by the professional body or regulatory authority.

Sixteen Member Bodies answered that progress can be measured by examining the achievement logs by the trainees. This can be also regularly controlled by the mentor and/or the Member Body. These traineeship records would indeed offer the possibility to compare the overall programme and what has been effectively realised.

4.3. *Further Comments*

Answers reveal that the mentor plays a major role in reviewing the work programme and evaluating the trainees' performance compared to the work programme.

Paragraph 44 of IEPS 3 assigns several responsibilities to mentors which are directly connected to monitoring and controlling the acquisition of competences, for instance, regularly reviewing trainees' experience, providing them with appropriate supervision, mentoring, counselling and evaluation, and assessing their achievement of competences.

Appropriate combination of mentors' interventions, licensing body's monitoring initiatives and tests and examinations is likely to be necessary in order to achieve the objective of an effective assessment of practical experience.

5. APPOINTMENT AND ROLE MENTOR

5.1. Requirements in IES 5 and EU Directives

5.1.1. Mentor in IES 5 and IEPS 3

IES 5 requires: “Experience leading to qualification as a professional accountant should be conducted under the direction of a mentor who is an experienced member of an IFAC Member Body” (para. 18). The role of the mentor is further commented on in paragraph 23 of IES 5. Mentors may be responsible for the planning of the practical experience period and provide guidance to trainees. IES 5 also suggests that member bodies may wish to provide experience for mentors and put in place reporting arrangements.

IEPS-3 provides further guidance on the role and responsibilities of mentors. “The term, “mentor” is intended to convey the concept of experienced professional accountants regularly passing on their experience, guiding trainees, and assisting trainees in merging formal learning with practical experience” (para.. 44). IFAC Member Bodies may consider establishing a formal mentoring process, supported by appropriate documentation (e.g., roles and responsibilities). That documentation will likely identify key elements such as:

- identifying potential mentors;
- appointing, approving, and experience mentors;
- monitoring mentors; and
- alternative mentoring arrangements (where necessary) (para.46-49).

5.1.2. Mentor in EU Directives

The Statutory Audit Directive requires explicitly that “at least two-thirds of such practical *training* shall be completed with a statutory auditor or audit firm approved in any Member State.” This means that one third of the practical experience may be gained with a mentor who is not an approved statutory auditor, or who is not approved in the European Union.

The concept of “approved statutory auditor” refers to the conditions raised by the Directive to be a fully qualified auditor. It does not go as far as requiring additional professional experience or specific experience for mentors. The Directive however requires: “Member States shall ensure that all experience is carried out with persons providing adequate guarantees regarding their ability to provide the practical experience” (Art.10).

The specific situation of an audit firm is not further regulated by the Directive. In particular, it is not said that monitoring the work of the trainee on behalf of the firm must be delegated to a natural person who is entitled to carry out statutory audits on behalf of the audit firm. In the absence of specific regulation of the issue, and except for explicit provision of the national law, it would be legitimate in such cases to refer to IFAC standards.

5.2. Summary of Responses to the FEE Survey

5.2.1. Conditions to be a Mentor

The FEE survey shows that 6 Member Bodies do not require explicitly that the practical experience must be supervised by a mentor.

Concerning the qualifications required by the mentor there is some variety among the FEE Member Bodies. In 28 countries it is at least required that the mentor is a member of the Professional Body. However, 5 FEE Member Bodies require a minimum of 5-year membership, 5 Member Bodies require the mentor to be member for at least 3 years and 3 requires 2 years membership before being allowed to be a mentor.

It is interesting to note that two UK Member Bodies reported difference between two types of mentors. The most senior mentor or experience principal is a person with sufficient seniority within the organisation, normally a partner or a director at the top of the organisation. He is responsible to ensure implementation of an adherence to the Institute's experience policy. The qualified persons responsible for experience will be counselling members who are normally more junior qualified accountants. They must ensure that the experience and experience given to the trainees allocated to him are of sufficient quality and of nature to fulfil the Institute requirements on a day-to-day basis.

The system of mentor in an audit firm needs to be combined with the normal requirement on experience within the firm. The traditional individual relationship between mentor and the trainee must be looked at with a slightly different perspective in a larger organisation.

It is interesting to note that only 22 respondents on 38 answered that the mentor must work in the same firm or organisation as the trainee.

5.2.2. Relationships with Employers

IES 5 states that for a programme of practical experience to be effective, it is necessary for the professional body or regulatory authority, the trainee, the mentor and the employer to work together. The programme of practical experience should be mutually beneficial to both the trainee and the employer and be developed together. IEPS 3 adds that "Employers play a vital role in (a) working with IFAC member bodies and trainees to ensure the completion of a period of practical experience that satisfies IFAC member bodies' requirements, (b) identifying and supporting mentors, and (c) helping to match mentors with trainees" (para. 60). IEPS 3 also provides detailed guidance on establishing a recognised employer scheme or working with employers that are not recognised employers³.

In 14 Member Bodies, guidelines exist on the role and responsibilities of employers during the experience period.

In 14 Member Bodies, a review process has been put in place to ensure the continuing suitability of employers to provide a wide experience for trainees but only in 12 Member Bodies specific guidelines have been issued to promote the good working relationship, among the trainee, the mentor and the employer.

³ This is often the case where trainees gain practical experience in the corporate sector. In such situations, the professional Institute, together with mentors and trainees, will need to work with the employer to plan the trainee's practical experience ensure that the he gains appropriate practical experience, and provide evidence of competences gained. (IEPS 3, par. 72)

5.2.3. *Guidelines and Experience of the Mentors*

In most countries requiring a mentor to be appointed, it is also required that the mentor is a qualified accountant and a competent professional. However, it was also useful to survey the preparation of the mentors to their specific responsibilities in educating young professionals. Obviously the legal or regulatory principles of the organisation of the experience period provide some high level principles on the purpose of the experience period. The question remains however, to know whether the Member Bodies are going further and provide specific guidelines defining the mentor's role and responsibilities, or the existence of specific experience for candidates mentor. IES 5 encourages Member Bodies to provide experience for mentors and to put in place reporting arrangements (para. 23).

Nineteen Member Bodies developed guidelines defining the mentor's roles and responsibilities but the same number of Member Bodies do not have any guidelines even though the appointment of a mentor is required.

Only 3 Member Bodies impose experience to become a mentor.

The answers to the question related to the existence of a periodical evaluation of mentors shows also a very low rate of positive answers; such periodical evaluation exists only in five cases.

5.3. *Further Comments*

5.3.1. *Location of the Mentor*

The location where the practical experience is taking place was not specifically surveyed. However, the issue is relevant when the practical experience implies that the trainee moves to different places. This is in line with the objective of developing an internal market in the EU.

However spending the practical period in different locations raises questions on the organisation of the experience, which were not addressed in details in IFAC standards. This might reduce the proximity - and consequently influence and control - between mentor and trainee. Also, the trainee may be required to practice in different environments, as stated above, this is clearly positive unless, in case of excess, if it makes the experience superficial.

IEPS 3 addresses one aspect of this problem when recognising that suitably qualified mentors may not always be available in a trainee's workplace. "Where this is the case, IFAC Member Bodies should consider establishing alternative mentoring arrangements, which could include (...) a team of trained remote mentors who meet the Member Body's criteria for mentors, and who are available where an employer is unable to provide such expertise. In these circumstances, it is essential that the remote mentor, the IFAC member body (and/or regulatory authority), the trainee, and the employer make an extra effort to work together. For example, establishing a "Mentor Charter for Trainees" that details the required support and the obligations of all parties can support that effort" (para. 50 a.).

5.3.2. *Statutory Auditors in EU*

The EU Statutory Audit Directive requires that "at least two thirds of such practical experience shall be completed with a statutory auditor or audit firm approved in any Member State". It does not specify that the approved statutory auditor or audit firm must be located in the Member State approving or registering the statutory auditor. It does not even require that the mentor is located in the EU as long

as he is approved in a Member State. This is the responsibility of the mentor to provide adequate experience at the place where he is located. However, the Directive also states that “Member States shall ensure that all experience is carried out with persons providing adequate guarantees regarding their ability to provide practical experience.” On that basis additional conditions might be introduced by national legislations for instance concerning the location of the mentor.

A question might be raised however on the genuine objective of the EU legislator. The objective is clearly linked to the quality of the experience. However, the issue is less about location than about the purpose of the experience period: the trainee must practice statutory audit as it is organised in the EU for at least 2/3 of the experience period in whatever Member State.

This interpretation results from the comparison between the original Eighth Directive of 1984 by the new EU legislation of 2006. Whereas the previous text clearly allowed Member States to require that 2/3 of the experience is completed under a person approved under its law, the Directive 2006/43/EC prevent them from doing so. The 2/3 must be completed with a statutory auditor or audit firm approved in *any* Member State. What was a possible interpretation of the requirement in the old Eighth Directive is now made specific in the formulation of this requirement

This change in the Directive leaves the issue of location totally open: how could a mentor located in an office far from where the trainee is working, effectively contribute or just monitor the practical experience? The question should not be a matter of interpretation of the Directive; it is just about quality in the education of young professionals. In that respect, it is also useful to recall the above mentioned article 10 of the Directive which assumes that the mentor should be able to monitor adequately the acquisition of practical experience.

6. ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

6.1. Requirements IES 5 and EU Directives

Before a trainee qualifies as professional accountant, the licensing body should assess the practical experience gained by the trainee. IES 5 requires that such assessment should be based on written submissions reviewed by supervisors or mentors and possibly supported oral submissions made by trainees. The Standard requires specifically that the Member Bodies, whose members are eligible for an audit license at the point of qualification, ensure that appropriate audit experience is acquired during the prequalification period (para. 24).

This is obviously in line with the requirement in the European Directive on Statutory Audit which only requires that the examination of professional competence not only guarantees the necessary level of theoretical knowledge of subjects relevant to statutory audit but also the ability to apply such knowledge in practice (Art.7).

6.2. Summary of Responses to the FEE Survey

6.2.1. Report to the Member Body or the Licensing Authority

IEPS 3 suggests that evidence and documentation that mentors may require to support their assessment of trainees' competence could include practical experience records, learning logs, learner diaries, and portfolios of evidence (para. 56).

The FEE survey shows that in 22 Member Bodies, the mentor must address progress reports and a final assessment of the experience gained during the experience period to the Member Body or the licensing authorities outside the profession.

Answering the question "How is progress of the practical experience measured?", many Member Bodies, especially those who do not have any mandatory system of work log, answered that it is the responsibility of those who are in charge of the written or oral examination, to test whether the experience has been sufficient. Where work log systems are put in place, the body receiving the summary of the work done can assess whether this is appropriate to fulfil the objectives of the experience period.

6.2.2. Report to the Employer

Only 11 respondents answered that the mentor has to report on the practical experience of the trainee to the employer.

However, on the question: "Are the work assignments, level of supervision and assessment strategies in adherence with the employers system of quality controls?", 25 Member Bodies answered that this must be the case. A respondent pointed out that there is a wide variety of experience environments and the system of quality control is not exactly comparable in an accounting firm and in another environment, for instance in business, industry or government. The majority of Member Bodies which answered positively to the question are only licensing accountants or auditors in practice and are therefore submitted to the International Standards on Quality Control issued by IFAC.

7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Practical experience is an essential part in the qualification requirements of professional accountants. It is identified as such in pronouncements of the International Accounting Education Standards Board of IFAC and in the EU Directives on Recognition of Professional Qualification and on Statutory Audit.
2. The FEE survey shows that in all 38 FEE Member Bodies participating in the survey, trainees or candidates or students must satisfy requirements related to practical work experience before being a fully qualified professional accountant. All Member Bodies licensing statutory auditors also comply with the practical experience requirement which exists in EU regulation since 1984.
3. All FEE Member Bodies consider that the knowledge, skills and attitude that are expected to be developed are in alignment with those specified in IES 2, 3 and 4. The same unanimity does not exist concerning IES 8 for different reasons in particular when the Member Body is not competent to set the requirements to be licensed as an auditor.
4. In the 38 FEE Member Bodies surveyed, the experience period can be carried out in an accounting firm. Twenty three Member Bodies also allow getting experience in a different environment. Depending on the organisation of the profession in the countries surveyed, the experience period can be achieved in business, government or education.
5. The requirements usually include input-based elements, especially in terms of hours and years. The survey reveals a broad consistency in the length of required practical work experience among FEE Member Bodies. Three years is the usual period of practical experience which would only be modified in specific circumstances. In 3 countries, the usual period is longer than 3 years. In 2 countries, it needs only to be 2 years.
6. Thirty two Member Bodies require that a mentor is appointed who is a member of the Professional Body. In 6 cases, it is not explicitly required that the practical experience be supervised by a mentor. Eighteen Member Bodies developed guidelines defining the mentor's roles and responsibilities. Others do not have any guidelines even though the appointment of a mentor is required.
7. In 22 Member Bodies, the mentor must address progress reports and a final assessment of the experience gained during the experience period to the Member Body or the licensing authorities outside the profession.
8. In a minority of cases, 14 Member Bodies, guidelines also exist on the role and responsibilities of employers during the experience period.

ANNEX A: COMPILATION OF RESPONSES RECEIVED TO THE IFAC/FEE QUESTIONNAIRE ON PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE – 1 JANUARY 2007

1. PRIMARY COMPOSITION OF THE MEMBER INSTITUTE'S MEMBERSHIP

COUNTRY	AUDITORS & ACCOUNTANTS IN PUBLIC PRACTICE	ACCOUNTANTS IN BUSINESS	ACCOUNTANTS IN PUBLIC SECTOR	ACADEMICS
Austria				
• IWP	Y			
• KWT	Y			
Belgium				
• IRE	Y			
• IEC	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bulgaria	Y			
Cyprus	Y	Y	Y	Y
Czech Republic	Y			
Denmark	Y			
Estonia	Y			
Finland	Y			
France	Y			
Germany	Y			
Greece	Y			
Hungary	Y			
Ireland				
• ICAI	Y	Y		
• ICPAI	Y	Y	Y	Y
Israel	Y			
Italy				
• CNDC	Y	Y	Y	Y
• CNRPC	Y	Y	Y	Y
Latvia	Y			
Lithuania	Y			
Luxembourg (IRE)	Y			
Malta	Y	Y		
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y	Y
Norway	Y			
Poland	Y			
Portugal	Y			
Romania	Y	Y	Y	Y
Slovak Republic	Y	Y	Y	Y
Slovenia	Y	Y		Y
Spain	Y			
Sweden	Y			
Switzerland	Y	Y		Y
UK				
• ACCA	Y	Y	Y	Y
• CIPFA	Y	Y	Y	Y
• ICAS	Y	Y	Y	Y
• ICAEW	Y	Y	Y	Y

2. All respondents to the survey answered positively to the question: “Does your member body require trainees/candidates/students to obtain practical work experience before qualifying as professional accountants?”

3. IS A SPECIFIC PERIOD OF TIME REQUIRED?

COUNTRY	ANSWER (Y/N)	DURATION	PART-TIME (Y/N)	PERIOD OF VALIDITY
Austria				
• IWP	Y	3 years	Y	N
• KWT	Y	3 years	Y	N
Belgium				
• IRE	Y	3 years	Y – minimum 1000 h per year	N
• IEC	Y	3 years	Y – minimum 1000 h per year	
Bulgaria	Y	4 to 10 years	N	N
Cyprus	Y	3 years	Y	N
Czech Republic	Y	3 years	Y – 35 h per week	N
Denmark	Y	2 years	Y – 3 years in total	N
Estonia	Y	3 years	Y	N
Finland	Y	3 years	Y	N
France	Y	3 years	Y	5 years
Germany	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Master: 3 years ▪ Bachelor: 4 years ▪ 10 years experience: NO 	Y	N
Greece	Y	7 years	N	?
Hungary	Y	3 years	Y – 20 h per week	5 to 7 years
Ireland				
• ICAI	Y	3 to 3 ½ years	N	Contract with the firm 3 years from final exam
• ICPAI	Y	3 years	Y – 4 days per week	
Israel	Y	2 years	Y	N
Italy				
• CNDC	Y	3 years	Y	N
• CNRPC	Y	3 years	Y	N
Latvia	Y	3 years	Y – 720 h per year	5 years
Lithuania	Y	3 years	Y	N
Luxembourg (IRE)	Y	3 years	N	N
Malta	Y	3 years	Y	N
Netherlands	Y	3 years	Y – 3000 h in total	Results of completed half year period valid for 6 years
Norway	Y	3 years	Y	No
Poland	Y	3 years	Y	?
Portugal	Y	3 years	Y – 700 h per year	5 years
Romania	Y	3 years	N	?
Slovak Republic	Y	3 years	Y	?
Slovenia	Y	5 years	Y – minimum hours required	N
Spain	Y	3 years (2 years with a registered auditor)	Y	N
Sweden	Y	3 + 2 years	Y – 1500 h in total converted pro rata	5 years
Switzerland	Y	3 years	Y – converted pro rata	N

COUNTRY	ANSWER (Y/N)	DURATION	PART-TIME (Y/N)	PERIOD OF VALIDITY
UK				
• ACCA	Y	36 months	Y ⁴	N
• CIPFA	Y	450 days	Y	N
• ICAS	Y	400 days	N	3 years
• ICAEW	Y	450 days	Y ⁵	3 to 5 years

⁴ ACCA: Experience gained in a part-time or temporary position can be used provided that the work experience is gained in a relevant role and is of the required breadth and depth to contribute towards achieving the competence requirements (called Performance Objectives) and is properly supervised. Students may find that experience gained in a part-time or temporary position does not allow them to achieve many elements of competence and may not provide them with sufficient opportunities for career development. Also, work experience gained on a part-time basis can only count towards the practical experience requirements for membership on a pro-rata basis but must collectively amount to 36 months as a minimum. Therefore, wherever possible, it is advisable to obtain full time work experience that is relevant, supervised and helps to obtain the minimum 13 Performance Objectives.

⁵ ICAEW: It is possible for a student to complete a training contract based on less than a standard 5-day working week. For example, some ACA students would be employed working 3 and 4 days a week. However, the key point is that during the required 3 - 5 year training contract, at least 450 days of purely technical work experience must be achieved in order to qualify for membership and therefore any person working less than 3 days a week would find it very difficult to achieve the required amount of technical work experience before their contract expired.

4. ARE SPECIFIC AREAS OF WORK EXPERIENCE PART OF THE REQUIREMENT?

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Austria	NO
Belgium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRE • IEC 	<p>Minimum 1000 of audit work per year plus a sufficient diversity in assignments and sectors of relevant audit work.</p> <p>Experience with focus on specific defined areas (audit, assurance work, financial reporting, company law, bookkeeping and tax).</p>
Bulgaria	Topics are professional experience in the field of accounting, internal and external financial audit, as an agent of tax administration and/ or as a trainer in the field of accounting, control and finance: There is no specified percentage.
Cyprus	There are 9 key areas; there is no specified percentage.
Czech Republic	The experience period must focus 100% on all aspects of an audit assistant work.
Denmark	Emphasis is placed on audit and assurance work. There is no specified percentage.
Estonia	NO
Finland	Practical audit experience must be obtained under the supervision of an authorised auditor (KHT auditor) or consist of equally demanding auditing and accounting activities.
France	2/3 of the three-year experience period or 2 years (as required by the 8 th EU Directive) must focus on audit and assurance work.
Germany	Two years of the required practical experience must be in the area of audit and assurance work, a substantial portion (minimum 53 weeks) in the audit of financial statements.
Greece	Emphasis is placed on audit. There is no specified percentage.
Hungary	Yes, specific areas of work experience is part of the requirement: "It is of key importance that he learns the <i>whole process</i> of the auditing of the annual report, from the signing of the auditing contract, through the preparation of the auditor's opinion to the writing of the management letter. As a result of the nature of the areas of auditing and their complexity, the candidate must learn more and more areas according to the annual program worked out with the mentor, considering the client's portfolio of the certain audit firm. He must get acquainted with and gradually rely on the Hungarian National Auditing Standards and those methodological guidance that are used by the audit firm".
Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAI • ICPAI 	<p>New experience guidelines require each trainee must acquire specified competencies over a broad range of activities identified. Some are mandatory - broad business skills, financial reporting/personal- interpersonal skills. In 2006 ICAI moved from a time based record of practical experience to a competency led process.</p> <p>Relevant areas are: 1) Financial Accounting, 2) Auditing and Statutory Compliance, 3) Corporate Planning, Control and Treasury Management, 4) Information / Financial Systems, 5) Management Skills and 6) Taxation. Trainees may train in public practice or industry. The experience environments differ from sector to sector. Trainees must obtain an in-depth level of experience in at least two of the six areas listed above. Trainees in public practice will focus more on areas 2 and 6 than those in industry.</p>
Israel	Emphasis is placed on audit and assurance work. There is no specified percentage.
Italy	Practical Experience includes all those activities aimed at enabling the trainee to successfully pass the state examination for qualifying as professional accountants and practice as a public practitioner (e.g. accounting, annual and consolidated accounts, tax, tax litigation, corporate law, insolvency procedures, IT, skills, ethics).
Latvia	The emphasis in respect of professional experience is made on independent audit (720 hrs a year) of financial statement based on assumption that active work in such audits, covering all stages and major areas of the audit involves a full range of practical application of knowledge in professional ethics, auditing, accounting, tax, corporate law, business, IT and general management, as well as exercising interpersonal skills. There is no specified percentage.
Lithuania	The trainee will get experience in audit of annual and consolidated accounts but there is no fixed percentage.
Luxembourg (IRE)	The Mentor must ensure that the trainee will get experience in audit of annual and consolidated accounts and ethics in all segments of activities specific to the economic environment in the country.
Malta	
Netherlands	YES - Financial auditing and assurance work, financial accounting and reporting work, and work related to accounting information systems / internal control. Financial Auditing must represent 33% (at least 1000 hours). No percentage is defined for others aspects (relatively, linked to audit work).
Norway	At least 3 years of varied work experience in auditing annual accounts or similar financial statements. Up to two years of work experience from municipal and county auditing and tax auditing may be approved as such work experience, if this practice is judged to be clearly relevant to the statutory audit of annual financial statements. The Financial Supervisory Authority of Norway may approve as relevant work experience up to one year of work experience from internal auditing, government auditing, inspection operations or other relevant activities.
Poland	YES - There are specific programmes of the accounting practice and the audit practice to be qualified by the Examination Committee. During the audit practice a candidate is obliged to possess knowledge related to the audit of the financial statements. There is no specific distribution of the time put in the program of the accounting practice/audit practice.
Portugal	NO

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Romania	The minimum programme of the experience curriculum is established by CECCAR and defines in number of days the specific areas of work experience.
Slovak Republic	80-90% of all activities must be spent on participation in audit of annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements, and financial reporting, financial analyses, tax law, IT and computing systems, corporate, general, and financial economics.
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO - The practical training must last at least three years, on work related to the financial and accounting fields, and shall be especially related to annual accounts, consolidated accounts or similar financial balance sheets.
Sweden	More than half of the 1 500 hours must be work with legal entities that need statutory audit and in different sectors.
Switzerland	Only internal or external audit-work is recognised as qualified practical experience. As long as the work is within the area of audit work, the work environments are free.
UK	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCA • CIPFA • ICAS • ICAEW 	<p>In order to conduct specific types of accountancy work the individual must be qualified and also hold a Practising Certificate. In addition, in order for the individual to obtain an Audit Qualification and the right to sign audit reports, the individual must obtain 30% of the post-membership experience in audit work (approximately 924 hours as a guidelines). Approximately 20% must be in company audit. A further 10% can be in audit work of companies established under the Companies Acts, or other statutory audit work, or not statutory audit work where the provisions of the Statements of Auditing Standards apply and where an opinion or certificate is placed on accounts.</p> <p>For students undertaking CIPFA's Initial Professional Development Scheme (CIPFA's practical experience requirements), logged experience must be drawn from at least four different areas of experience within the Statement of Expertise and a minimum of 20 days must be logged for each of the four different areas. CIPFA has a Statement of Expertise comprising eight areas of work. This statement describes many of the professional skills required within organisations to enable them to operate effectively and successfully.</p> <p>Students must attain competencies in Accounting and Information Technology, Communication skills and Personal skills plus 12 individual competencies from a range of areas of experience and 5 specialist competencies from one area of experience. The proportion depends on the experience environment.</p> <p>The 450 days of technical work experience must be drawn from appropriate areas, for example, accounting, auditing, financial management, taxation etc. Students must also complete mandatory programmes of "initial professional development (IPD)" and structured ethics training.</p>

5. IN WHAT TYPES OF WORK ENVIRONMENTS CAN PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE BE GAINED?

COUNTRY	PUBLIC PRACTICE	BUSINESS	GOVERNMENT	EDUCATION	OTHERS
Austria	Y				
Belgium	Y				
• IRE	Y				
• IEC	Y	Y	Y		
Bulgaria	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cyprus	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Czech Republic	Y				
Denmark	Y				
Estonia	Y				
Finland	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
France	Y	Y	Max. 1 year	Max. 1 year	Max. 1 year
Germany	Y				
Greece	Y				
Hungary	Y				
Ireland	Y				
• ICAI	Y	Y	Y		
• ICPAI	Y	Y	Y		
Israel	Y				
Italy	Y				
• CNDC	Y				
• CNRPC	Y	Y			
Latvia	Y				
Lithuania	Y				
Luxembourg (IRE)	Y				
Malta	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y		
Norway	Y		Y		
Poland	Y	Y	Y		
Portugal	Y	Y			
Romania	Y	Y		Y	
Slovak Republic	Y	Y			
Slovenia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Spain	Y	Y max 1 year and in areas of internal audit and financial reporting	Y		
Sweden	Y	Y	Y		
Switzerland	Y	Y	Y	Y	
UK	Y ⁶	Y	Y	Y	
• ACCA	Y	Y	Y	Y	
• CIPFA	Y	Y	Y	Y	
• ICAS	Y	Y	Y	Y	
• ICAEW	Y	Y	Y	Y	

⁶ For a Practising Certificate and Audit Qualification a minimum period within a Public Practice and within Audit work is specified.

6. WHAT OUTCOMES ARE THE EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS INTENDED TO ACHIEVE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	To gain necessary experience.
Belgium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRE • IEC 	<p>Ability to carry out all assignments of a statutory auditor in Belgium.</p> <p>Ability to perform and to manage with success accountants' activities.</p>
Bulgaria	Practical experience in accountancy and audit, application of IFRSs and ISAs.
Cyprus	Achieve at least 16 (out of 68) elements of competence; 12 technical and 4 management.
Czech Republic	Through gaining experience requirements audit assistant should be prepared to work as an auditor. In addition, audit firms are generally obliged to allow audit assistants to prepare for the audit exams.
Denmark	Full knowledge of normal types of work within an audit firm.
Estonia	Not specified.
Finland	That a person becomes skilled to apply theory in practice.
France	To sit for the final exam taking place after the three-year practical experience and help the trainees/candidates being able to settle as a professional accountant and/or auditor.
Germany	Sufficient practical experience for the practice of the profession, particularly in the area of audit and assurance work.
Greece	Concurrently the theoretical education and the 7 year working experience are essential to ensure high quality of audit services.
Hungary	The candidate must be capable to perform statutory audit procedures.
Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAI • ICPAI 	<p>The purpose of the period of professional development is to enable trainee members to acquire</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. professional values, 2. personal and interpersonal skills 3. functional competencies; and 4. an awareness of the practicalities of the business environment <p>Throughout their period of professional development trainees chronicle the acquisition of the values, skills and competencies in the CA Diary of Professional Development (the CA Diary).</p> <p>The general requirement of the Institute is that a trainee will have acquired experience across a broad range of accounting related areas and at an appropriate level of responsibility. Our Experience Record specifies three levels of responsibility. This is to ensure that the entry level CPA, having had three years relevant supervised experience, has developed and demonstrated the necessary competence to function effectively as a professional accountant.</p>
Israel	Audit and tax competences.
Italy	Ability to apply in practice the theoretical knowledge in technical and legal areas for the purpose of providing professionals services; assessment of specific competency to carry a professional engagement; interpersonal skills, ethics, professional behaviour; practice management; etc.
Latvia	Experience requirements are intended to ensure that sufficient practical experience in all areas of accounting and auditing is obtained.
Lithuania	Appropriate practical experience.
Luxembourg (IRE)	The objective of the practical experience is to provide the trainee with audit/ethics practical technical knowledge from all Luxembourg economics sectors.
Malta	To ensure that the prospective candidates are suitably trained to become professional accountants.
Netherlands	To meet the requirements of a (entry level) statutory auditor.
Norway	The experience requirements are intended to secure that the person in question is capable of undertaking auditing engagements.
Poland	<p>The aim of the accounting practice is to achieve by a candidate a knowledge at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ organisation and a technique of book keeping (including using a computer system), ▪ qualifying accountancy evidences for booking correctly, ▪ using appropriate law provisions to fulfil duties, ▪ booking various economic operations, ▪ preparing financial statements, tax declarations, assurance documents etc. <p>The aim of the audit practice is to achieve by a candidate a knowledge at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ choosing and the application the appropriate methods and techniques for the audit of the financial statements (including using a computer system), ▪ preparing the audit documentation (including report of a statutory auditor), ▪ cooperation with the client's representatives, which financial statements are audited.
Portugal	The practical experience must give to the candidate appropriate education and practice in order to develop the professional activity and so that he can perform his work with competence and responsibility, especially in a technical and ethical manner.

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Romania	The candidates must prove that they have acquired the professional knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the values, ethics and professional deontology required by the CECCAR in order to gain access to the professional qualifications.
Slovak Republic	Gather practical professional experience relating to audit activities in working process. Practical experience requirements are included in the education program, duration and intensity shall be sufficient to allow the candidates to demonstrate that they have gathered professional knowledge, skills and professional values, ethics and attitudes necessary to carry out audit work (usually, such period is 3 years).
Slovenia	They are intended to achieve practical knowledge.
Spain	Not specified, although it is intended to have a practical knowledge of the profession
Sweden	The ability to apply knowledge in practice, professional values. The government is the provider of the final examination (in writing).
Switzerland	The goal is to gain practical experience in the area of audit work, so that after achieving the title of as a professional auditor the candidate is able to lead an audit engagement within the given laws, standards and enterprise-regulations. Whereas our institution assures the theoretical part of the education, the work experience provides the practical part.
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCA Achievement of the 13 Performance Objectives is primarily designed to help the trainee focus on the development of professional, ethical, technical and management skills that will enable them to meet ACCA's practical experience requirements for membership and meet the expectations upon a qualified professional accountant. They will prepare the trainee for accounting positions across a range of sectors. The process also enables the employer to shape the outcomes, within the bounds of ACCA's requirements, so as to meet the needs of that employer and the trainee. • CIPFA The Initial Professional Development Scheme reflects CIPFA's emphasis on the development of practical skills within the workplace to complement the more theoretical knowledge and techniques students learn through the education modules. Increasingly, our research shows that employers require professional staff who can demonstrate workplace experience; and they expect qualifications to reflect this by providing opportunities for students to be assessed on their performance in the workplace. Employers require staff that are able to demonstrate that they are capable of taking the outcomes from study (knowledge) and applying them appropriately in their place of work (skills); they are required to demonstrate the use of judgment in the selection and application of theory to real-life situations. Furthermore, increasing regulation and an emphasis on the accountability of the professional demands the maintenance of up to date knowledge and skills through continuing professional development. By placing the assessment of initial professional development firmly within the experience element of the education and experience scheme, CIPFA's Professional Accountancy Qualification highlights the importance of preparing its future members for continuing professional development. To that end, a key development in CIPFA's Initial Professional Development Scheme is its encouragement to develop the habit of reflection as part of the workplace learning experience and to provide the framework with which to demonstrate this learning experience to others. • ICAS The 450 days of relevant work experience requirement gives a breadth to the experience whilst the achievement of competencies gives a depth to the work experience. • ICAEW To help ensure the student acquires the experiences, skills, attributes and behaviours necessary for membership - and to assist in preparation for the professional examinations.

7. ARE THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES (KSAs) THAT ARE EXPECTED TO BE DEVELOPED IN ALIGNMENT WITH THOSE SPECIFIED IN IES 2, 3 AND 4?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	YES
Belgium	
• IRE	YES
• IEC	YES
Bulgaria	YES
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	YES
Estonia	Not specified.
Finland	YES
France	YES
Germany	YES
Greece	YES
Hungary	YES
Ireland	YES
Israel	Yes
Italy	YES
Latvia	YES
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg IRE)	YES
Malta	YES
Netherlands	YES
Norway	YES
Poland	YES
Portugal	YES
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	YES
Spain	YES
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	YES
UK	YES

7.A. IF YOUR INSTITUTE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EDUCATION OF AUDIT PROFESSIONALS, ARE THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES (KSAS) THAT ARE EXPECTED TO BE DEVELOPED IN ALIGNMENT WITH THOSE SPECIFIED IN IES 8 (COMPETENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDIT PROFESSIONALS)?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	YES
Belgium (IRE)	YES - But all rules are not yet applicable in Belgium (see Directive 2006/43 on statutory audits of annual accounts and consolidated accounts, amending Council Directives 78/660/EEC and 83/349/EEC and repealing Council Directive 84/253/EEC). The member body closely follows the developments of the concerned rules in constant evolution and ascertains that its members become aware of these.
Bulgaria	YES
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	Not specified
Finland	N/A
France	YES - However, the two Institutes (CSOEC & CNCC) have decided to modernise and reinforce the trainees' education in Audit, in accordance with the IES 8 and the French specificities attached to the "Commissaire aux comptes" (legal controller) activities. The CSOEC & CNCC refer for that to the "Common Content Project" and the "Audit and related services" (ARS) learning outcomes and knowledge. This new syllabus for the trainees should be effective in 2008.
Germany	YES
Greece	YES
Hungary	YES
Ireland	YES
Israel	N/A
Italy	N/A
Latvia	YES
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	YES
Netherlands	YES - NIVRA is not responsible for theoretical knowledge.
Norway	N/A
Poland	Government is working on the implementation of the Statutory Audit Directive.
Portugal	NO
Romania	NO
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	YES
Spain	YES
Sweden	YES - FAR SRS recommends during practical experience 368 hours of classes for the first three years (Approved Public Accountant) and another 104 for the last two years to the higher qualification (Authorised Public Accountant). FAR SRS has a separate entity, IREV, providing all sorts of experience, both IPD and CPD. FAR SRS membership as qualified is not mandatory. The large firms have their own experience departments. Minimum framework requirements are issued by the Government and supplementary guidance by FAR SRS. Auditors Act (SFS 2001:883) Auditors Ordinance (RNFS 1996:1).
Switzerland	YES
UK	<p>YES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCA • CIPFA <p>YES - CIPFA holds recognised qualifying body (RQB) status, awarded by the UK Department of Trade & Industry (DTI), which means that appropriately qualified members are able to audit under the Companies Act 1989. Students following this Cert CAA route to membership are required to specific specialist papers and, in addition to the Initial Professional Development Scheme, are required to undertake a number of week's company audit experience (a total of 48 weeks of which 24 needs to be supervised by a recognised auditor.) Please see CIPFA's website at http://www.cipfa.org.uk/students/prospective/cert_caa.cfm for details. The required knowledge, skills and attitudes are congruent with IES 8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAS • ICAEW <p>YES YES</p>

8. ARE THE KEY LEARNING / DEVELOPMENT GOALS THAT TRAINEES / CANDIDATES / STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE ABILITY TO APPLY ACCOUNTING KSAS IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT, DEFINED AT THE OUTSET OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	NO
• IRE	YES - Trainees receive at the outset of the experience period a complete explanation of the expected goals and a manual of experience instructions.
• IEC	
Bulgaria	YES
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	YES - In accordance with the Act on Auditors an audit assistant must gain practical experience necessary for the performance of the audit services.
Denmark	NO
Estonia	Not specified.
Finland	N/A
France	YES - The KSAs are assessed by the Institute in the end of the three-year practical experience in order to authorise the candidate to sit for the final exam ("Diplôme d'Expertise comptable"). This assessment is based on the trainee's logbook and the final report of the mentor (a model of the logbook can be sent by mail; it is not yet downloadable).
Germany	NO
Greece	In working progress – result from working papers.
Hungary	YES - In addition to the answer to point 4, the candidate must experience day by day the requirements of documentation. He obtains experience in the supervision of the colleagues' work - may it be an assistant or a responsible auditor. He must develop the willingness to co-operate in teamwork, and should act regularly in the client-relationship.
Ireland	YES
Israel	N/A
Italy	NO - Only within the personal relationship between mentor and trainee.
Latvia	NO - Although the goals are not explicitly defined, the requirement to obtain comprehensive auditing experience and to obtain a recommendation from a mentor implies practical application of all the relevant theoretical knowledge. LACA's bylaws are in the process of revision to ensure full, explicit implementation of ISE's in 2007.
Lithuania	YES - Ability to apply Business Accounting Standards, IFRS, standards on auditing, ISAs, tax laws etc. in practice.
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	YES
Netherlands	A trainee is obliged to make year plans (also including semester plans). These plans must contain goals as mentioned. In four semesters (2, 3, 4 and 5) a trainee has to write an essay in which must be demonstrated that these goals are obtained. After each six month's period, the trainee has to report and is assessed by his trainer. The (last) sixth semester is completed by a thesis on a practical case and a final oral test (examined by two examiners appointed by NIVRA) in which these KSA's also must be demonstrated.
Norway	NO
Poland	YES
Portugal	NO
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	YES
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	YES

9. ARE THE LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT GOALS STATED AS COMPETENCES?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	NO
• IEC	YES
Bulgaria	YES
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	NO
Denmark	YES
Estonia	NO
Finland	N/A
France	NO - But it is one of the objectives of the reform on going (expected to be effective in 2008).
Germany	NO
Greece	YES
Hungary	YES
Ireland	YES
Israel	N/A
Italy	NO
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	N/A
Malta	YES
Netherlands	YES - No (not yet; we are considering to do this also).
Norway	YES
Poland	YES
Portugal	NO
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	YES
UK	
• ACCA	YES - Outcomes based statements of achievement.
• CIPFA	NO
• ICAS	YES
• ICAEW	YES

10. DOES YOUR MEMBER BODY HAVE A PROCESS FOR PERIODICALLY COMPARING THE LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT GOALS WITH THE NEEDS OF THE MARKET? (FOR EXAMPLE, CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYERS AND USERS)

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	N/A
Belgium	
• IRE	N/A
• IEC	NO
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	YES - This is done by the UK - ACCA with which we have a Joint Examination Scheme.
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	No official process.
Finland	N/A
France	YES - On informal basis.
Germany	N/A
Greece	N/A
Hungary	NO
Ireland	
• ICAI	Annual updating of experience guidelines and syllabus.
• ICPAI	Review process in 2005/06.
Israel	NO
Italy	
• CNDC	NO
• CNRPC	NO - Consultation with users.
Latvia	NO - LACA does only register auditors.
Lithuania	The Lithuanian Chamber of Auditors assesses the learning goals and compares them to the need of the market. Learning programmes are revised and renewed every year according to the requests of auditors and auditors' assistants. These requests are collected during the CPD courses of auditors and auditor's assistants.
Luxembourg (IRE)	N/A
Malta	The Institute's Education Committee which is composed of employers from the major firms and industry regularly reviews the requirements using the ACCA model as a benchmark.
Netherlands	During the yearly inspections (oversight site-visits) of the trainee offices this subject is part of the discussions; a broader evaluation of our system (including all stakeholders) takes place every three to four years (most recently in spring 2006).
Norway	No formal process but regular consultation.
Poland	During the practice a candidate works for at least three years with the professionals. These professionals (a candidate's superiors/mentors) require him to perform duties for the entity's clients, so according to the market needs. In this way candidates are always up to date with the latest knowledge and clients (= market) needs.
Portugal	NO
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A monitoring program is established, comprising ways and methods of approaching and reporting the practical experience. ▪ The communication in writing of the regulations and of the practical experience programme to the employers, mentors and trainees. ▪ Feed-back on the two aspects mentioned above.
Slovak Republic	NO - This requirement is included in the plan of major assignments of the Education Institute SKAU (paragraph 4.3) "Planning instruments for continuing professional development".
Slovenia	YES
Spain	YES
Sweden	Education committee.
Switzerland	The employers and users are working very close with our institution and are also delivering a big part of the theoretical know-how in special fields of work. This ongoing process is a guarantee, that the needs of the market are always focused.

COUNTRY	ANSWER
UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="236 322 347 344">• ACCA <li data-bbox="236 501 347 524">• CIPFA <li data-bbox="236 528 347 551">• ICAS <li data-bbox="236 555 347 577">• ICAEW 	<p>YES - ACCA regularly conducts satisfaction surveys to ensure it keeps up to date with the needs and views of its stakeholders. A sample of members and students are surveyed every quarter and approved employers and tuition providers on an annual/biannual basis. Feedback from these surveys is used in supporting product development.</p> <p>ACCA continually reviews its qualification to ensure that it is relevant and meet the needs of employers. Based on previous history, ACCA operates on a five to seven-year cycle. However, the exact timing will be driven by the rate of change in the accounting environment.</p> <p>YES</p> <p>YES</p> <p>YES</p>

11. HOW IS ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT GOALS ASSESSED?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	Written and oral exams.
Belgium	Monitoring through practical experience records. The working experience program includes examination, which must be passed during the experience period. Written as oral examination are parts of the assessment. Annual examination and monitoring capabilities through the control of the electronic traineeship records.
• IRE	
• IEC	
Bulgaria	N/A
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	Through the audit exams, final assessment and record of practical experience.
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	Not regulated.
Finland	Auditors' examination of professional competence (KHT exam) takes place after candidate has met all other qualification requirements (education, work experience etc.).
France	From the trainee's logbook kept in the local branch of the Institute (regional council), the annual report of the mentor, and the success to the final exam (see also the response to the question 8).
Germany	N/A
Greece	Written and oral examination.
Hungary	The mentor, the candidate and the audit firm evaluate the progress every year.
Ireland	1. online monitoring of CA Diary 2. by ICAI's assessment system. The academic achievements are assessed through the Institute's examinations process. Each student is required to submit annually an experience summary for the year (i.e. Section C, of the Experience Record). The experience for each student must be reviewed and signed off by his / her experience supervisor. At the beginning of each year, each student is encouraged to formally plan his / her experience with his/her supervisor in advance. Progress should then be reviewed quarterly against the experience plan by the supervisor and trainee.
• ICAI	
• ICPAI	
Israel	N/A
Italy	Written reports, periodic Local Branches' control on trainees' reports and final practical state examination. Trainees are also called for an interview and then they are given the final certificate which allows them to access the state examination. Practical Experience is also tested in one of the written examinations. This latter may focus on the technical areas of knowledge (i.e: accounting, auditing etc.).
Latvia	By the mentor who recommends the applicant for admission.
Lithuania	N/A
Luxembourg (IRE)	Le Maître de stage rencontre le stagiaire au moins une fois par an afin d'établir les objectifs pour l'année à venir et faire le point sur les objectifs atteints de l'année précédente. Les objectifs que fixera le Maître de stage d'un commun accord avec le stagiaire doivent être quantifiables et documentés par écrit. Les mesures à mettre en œuvre pour atteindre les objectifs doivent également prévoir les besoins en formation interne / externe notamment sur : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ la déontologie et la méthodologie d'audit ; ▪ les autres domaines de compétences du réviseur d'entreprises; ▪ les domaines spécifiques (consolidation, produits dérivés, etc.). Afin de suivre l'évolution du stagiaire dans sa formation sur le terrain, le Maître de stage effectuera une évaluation de la performance du stagiaire après chaque mission significative eu égard aux activités du Maître de stage ou du cabinet auquel il est lié, de la nature et du degré de difficulté de la mission. Le stagiaire devra éventuellement travailler pour d'autres réviseurs d'entreprises que son Maître de stage. Dans ces cas, il sera requis que l'évaluation de la performance de la mission établie par cet(ces) autre(s) réviseur(s) d'entreprises, soit revue, documentée par écrit et discutée périodiquement entre le Maître de stage et le stagiaire. Cette évaluation du stagiaire couvrira: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ la capacité d'aborder et de résoudre les problèmes techniques relatifs à la mission effectuée; ▪ les recommandations pour améliorer les connaissances techniques à court terme; ▪ la capacité du stagiaire d'aborder une mission, de la planifier, de la superviser, de l'exécuter et de la finaliser (quelle qu'en soit sa taille).
Malta	Direct confirmation by the applicant and attestation by a qualified supervisor.
Netherlands	After each semester the trainee is assessed. As mentioned under question 8 a trainee has to write four essays and a thesis. After having completed the three year period there is a final oral examination in which also the thesis must be defended by the trainee.
Norway	Through a number of exams, of which the final exam is a practical exam following the completion of theoretical and practical experience documenting that the person in question is capable of undertaking auditing engagements.

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Poland	Each candidate is required to prepare specified documents related to the accounting practice and the audit practice, which have to be approved by the entity, in which a candidate runs his practice (his superior must confirm with his signature that all the duties were fulfilled by the candidate). Then the Examination Committee verifies these documents. This the way these goals are assessed.
Portugal	The learning/development goals are assessed by the mentor that has the responsibility to issue a semester report containing the activities of the trainee and by the Practical Experience Commission that evaluates the trainee's semester report and annually meets with the trainee for a practical evaluation.
Romania	The achievement of the learning/ development goals is accomplished by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biannual written reports, ▪ Written and oral examinations through which the professional aptitudes and competences are being evaluated, in order to obtain the qualification.
Slovak Republic	YES
Slovenia	N/A
Spain	By employers.
Sweden	See question 7.
Switzerland	National test. At the end of the practical experience the candidates must pass a national test (written and oral), in which the candidate must demonstrate his theoretical and practical knowledge. Only those who pass the test become professional auditors.
UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCA • CIPFA 	<p>The mentor is responsible for the final certification that the trainee has achieved the required level of competence for each Performance Objective. They do this, in part, by evaluating the trainee's response to a set number of Challenge Questions in respect of that Performance Objective, as well reviewing the Trainee's development plan performance demonstrated on assignment.</p> <p>Students are required to submit a portfolio for assessment. CIPFA provides an accredited portfolio assessor whose task it is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and assess each portfolio in detail. ▪ Interview each candidate to discuss the portfolio and the student's learning in order to ascertain that the portfolio contains the student's own work and to discuss his/her experiences of applying his/her knowledge and skills in the workplace. ▪ Write a report that recommends: either that the portfolio is of a satisfactory standard to support an application for membership of the Institute or that the portfolio requires further work to achieve a satisfactory standard. <p>Students receive a copy of this report. Portfolio assessments and interviews are carried out at centres around the country, at pre-arranged times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAS • ICAEW <p>Completion of Achievement Log by student and assessment of achievement by reviewer followed by subsequent review by ICAS. Student and firm review progress together and certify outcomes to the Institute.</p>

12. DOES YOUR MODEL ALLOW FOR THE WORK EXPERIENCE AND THE FORMAL (ACADEMIC) EDUCATION PROCESSES TO BE FULFILLED SEQUENTIALLY OR CONCURRENTLY?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	Concurrently.
Belgium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRE • IEC 	Sequentially. Both sequentially and concurrently.
Bulgaria	Both sequentially and concurrently.
Cyprus	Both sequentially and concurrently.
Czech Republic	Sequentially.
Denmark	Sequentially - Time between both is maximum 8 years.
Estonia	Concurrently.
Finland	Both sequentially and concurrently.
France	To be allowed to access to the three-year experience period and be registered as trainees ("Experts-comptables stagiaires"), all the candidates must sit for a master degree level organised by the Ministry of Education. After the three-year experience period, all the candidates must sit for the final exam ("Diplôme d'Expertise comptable") also organised by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the two professional bodies. During the three-year experience period, all the trainees have to participate to 24 days of a specific and compulsory "CPD" program (which is being reviewed and modernised).
Germany	Sequentially.
Greece	Academic education in the fields of Accounting and Finance is provided by the corresponding Universities. As Institute, we provide audit professionals with post graduate studies on auditing, concurrently with the necessary working experience.
Hungary	Sequentially - Any natural person who has the qualifications of a certified public accountant, has no prior criminal record, desires to perform auditing activities in Hungary, is not party to a legal relationship as an employee, civil servant or public official, in a service relationship or employment-type legal relationship, has certified three years of professional experience in an employment relationship on the basis of a contract concluded with a member of the Chamber or who has worked with an auditor working for an auditing company registered at the Chamber may become a candidate. The candidate has to obtain 3 years practical work experience in the Mentor System.
Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAI • ICPAI 	Concurrently - ICAI trainees must have an experience contract prior to presenting for the FAE. Concurrently - Trainees study on evening or weekend programmes and train whilst in full-time relevant supervised employment.
Israel	Sequentially (usually).
Italy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNDC • CNRPC 	Sequentially. Sequentially.
Latvia	Concurrently - Trainee must gain three years of professional experience prior to qualifications exams; however this experience may be obtained simultaneously with higher economical education (i.e., university degree) which is a necessary pre-requisite to be admitted to the qualification examinations.
Lithuania	Both sequentially and concurrently.
Luxembourg (IRE)	Sequentially
Malta	Both - University students sequentially whilst ACCA students concurrently.
Netherlands	Both are possible; the last part of the practical experience program however can only be completed after the trainee has finished the complete theoretical program. During the last 3 years of the academic/theoretical portion a student /trainee is allowed to also follow the practical experience programme. This is only possible in case of a part-time theoretical study-program.
Norway	Sequentially.
Poland	Sequentially - Generally no, because the work experience can not be gained either concurrently or sequentially with the formal (academic) education processes because to become a candidate a one must have finished a high school (which is one of the requirement to become a candidate), but the Examinations Committee may exempt a candidate from <u>the accounting practice</u> (it does not concern the audit practice) normally taking one year, if candidate has at least 3-years-experience in an auditing company or was working in accounting as the supervisor or was working as the controller for tax authority (it does not matter whether the candidate worked these 3 years after he had finished the high school or concurrently with the school processes).
Portugal	Sequentially - Examination comes first, practical experience later.
Romania	?
Slovak Republic	Sequentially.

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Slovenia	Both sequentially and concurrently - Normally, to start special audit education at the Slovenian institute of auditors a candidate should have a university degree and appropriate work experience. But he/she can also be allowed to gain audit knowledge before finishing university degree or gaining appropriate work experience. Anyway, the requirements regarding education and work experience have to be fulfilled before issuing an audit licence.
Spain	Both sequentially and concurrently. Only after the university degree but may be gained during the period in which the candidate fulfils the additional educational requirements.
Sweden	Sequentially.
Switzerland	Concurrently - There is an academic course every year, in which the candidate can fulfil every module with the corresponding pre-test (the fulfilment of the pre-tests is an obligation to get access to the national exam). As the entry in our institution is only possible, if the candidate can prove that he's working in an area where it is possible to gain qualified practical experience, we normally have no problem on this side of our process as everybody is able to gain the necessary know-how to get access to the national exam.
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCA Both - ACCA recognises that the best practice for students is to gain their practical experience at the same time as sitting their exams. Whilst ACCA communicates this expectation to students, ACCA is also concerned with ensuring that there is flexibility which offers opportunity for individuals where their ability and application is evident. In spite of when, where or how experience is gained ACCA would wish to encourage students and prospective students to register with ACCA and bring appropriate experience with them. Students, therefore, can gain their practical experience before, during or after completion of the examinations, provided it is verifiable and relevant. There is no time limit to gaining practical experience and applying for ACCA membership. The 10 year time limit only applies to completing the examinations. ACCA conducts risk based monitoring of those who fall outside recommended best practice. • CIPFA Both - Students are employed during their study period and work on their portfolios throughout their education process. Portfolios can only be submitted once the final examinations have been sat to ensure that a final reflective process takes place at the end of the study period. Portfolios can be submitted at any time after the final examinations – there is no time bar on submission. However, all logged activity must have been completed within ten years of submission. • ICAS Concurrently - Student attends block release or intensive classes for education leading to examinations. This is concurrent to obtaining work experience in the workplace and completing an achievement log. • ICAEW Concurrently - Only a certain percentage of the examinations may be attempted outside a training contract. A student must have completed or be in the last year of a training contract to attempt the Case Study, which is normally the final admitting examination.

13. DOES YOUR MODEL RECOGNISE ALTERNATE, YET EQUIVALENT, APPROACHES TO MEET THE INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	YES (bridging procedure with IEC. Up to 2007, recognition of practical experience of 7 or 15 years, recognition of practical experience in another EU Member State). NO
• IRE	
• IEC	
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	NO
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	NO
Finland	NO
France	NO
Germany	NO
Greece	N/A
Hungary	NO
Ireland	ICAI is not prescriptive as to how competencies are to be required. NO
• ICAI	
• ICPAI	
Israel	NO
Italy	NO - Only with regard to practical experience it is possible to spend 6 month in an "equivalent" foreign practice. NO
• CNDC	
• CNRPC	
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	Within the current legislation the response is no. As the revised 8 th Directive is currently being enacted into national legislation, it is intended to suggest to the legislator equivalent approaches to meet the intended outcomes of the experience requirement.
Malta	NO
Netherlands	Exemption may be exceptionally granted.
Norway	NO
Poland	Practical examination for accounting practice; not applicable to audit.
Portugal	NO
Romania	YES - When not possible to conduct experience under mentor's supervision.
Slovak Republic	YES
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	NO
Switzerland	NO
UK	ACCA has a dual approach to the submitting of practical experience. ACCA recognises good employers those employer who provide best-practice environments in which to develop professional practical experience. As such trainees may opt in to their employer system where that employer has been accredited by ACCA. However for those trainees that are not able to gain experience in such an environment there are more detailed requirements and records to be maintained. This enables ACCA to focus support where it most matters. NO The optional competency model allows experience relevant to the individual to be recorded. An employer may apply to have their professional development system accredited as delivering the same work-based learning outcomes as the Institute's framework.
• ACCA	
• CIPFA	
• ICAS	
• ICAEW	

14. DOES YOUR MODEL REQUIRE THAT THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE BE SUPERVISED BY A MENTOR?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	YES
• IEC	YES
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	NO
Estonia	YES
Finland	NO
France	YES - The French rule requires two kinds of supervisors: the mentor who has the responsibility of the practical activities in the firm and the supervisor or controller who is nominated by the institute (regional council) to make sure that the trainee complies with his education program and his six-monthly activities reports. The controller also supervises the e-learning tests. He has more a role of a "tutor".
Germany	YES
Greece	YES
Hungary	YES
Ireland	
• ICAI	YES
• ICPAI	YES
Israel	YES
Italy	YES
Latvia	YES
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	YES
Malta	YES
Netherlands	YES
Norway	YES
Poland	YES
Portugal	YES
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	YES
Slovenia	NO
Spain	YES
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	YES
UK	
• ACCA	YES
• CIPFA	NO
• ICAS	YES
• ICAEW	YES

15. WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR ONE TO BE A MENTOR?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	N/A
Belgium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum 5 years membership of the IRE/IBR; ▪ Necessary experience, workload and diversity assignments for a good practical experience; ▪ Payment of membership fees and fulfilment of all administrative requirements towards the IRE/IBR ▪ No negative conclusion for the last quality control. Member of IEC for at least 5 years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRE • IEC 	
Bulgaria	N/A
Cyprus	To be a member of the Institute.
Czech Republic	To be a registered auditor.
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	To be a licensed auditor.
Finland	N/A
France	To be member of the Institute, Ordre des Experts-Comptables, have a real activity without any disciplinary sanctions and be initiated, if possible, to the new information technology (e-learning). To comply with the 8 th EU Directive, the mentor must also be registered (for at least the 2/3 part of the experience period) as a "Commissaire aux comptes" (legal controller) and have a real activity in statutory audit.
Germany	To be Wirtschaftsprüfer.
Greece	To be a member of SOEL.
Hungary	The following natural person auditors can be mentors: (1) he has pursued auditing activities - without suspension - for at least five years continuously, and in the 2 years before signing the mentoring agreement, he did not suspend his activities, (2) beside the candidate in question, he undertook mentoring responsibilities with maximum two other candidates, (3) he has a clean criminal record, and in the previous three years he was not condemned as result of an ethic procedure carried out by the ethic committee of the Chamber. (4) he has the approval of the authorised partner of the audit firm that employs him, (5) he has met the requirements during the last external quality review (6) he accepts the provisions of the regulation as binding for himself.
Ireland	NO A professional accountant must supervise at least half of each trainee's experience. Experience may, in part, be supervised where appropriate by a suitably qualified person in another discipline, e.g. Member of the Institute of Taxation, for experience in taxation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAI • ICPAI 	
Israel	4 to 5 year experience after being qualified.
Italy	Enrolled professional. Professional enrolled in the register for 5 years at least
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNDC • CNRPC 	
Latvia	Mentor must be an active certified auditor.
Lithuania	Auditor with not less than 3 years of working experience, no disciplinary penalties and has a written consent to supervise the work of the assistant.
Luxembourg (IRE)	Auditor with a minimum of 3 years IRE membership.
Malta	Must a member of the Institute or another recognised professional body.
Netherlands	A mentor must be a register accountant for 2 out of 3 years, the other year he may be another expert.
Norway	At least two years of the work experience shall take place under the supervision of a person who is a registered or state authorised auditor/public accountant.
Poland	The mentor must be a statutory auditor.
Portugal	5 years of professional experience.
Romania	5 years of professional experience plus qualitative criteria.
Slovak Republic	Mentors have the necessary professional abilities and 3 years of practice.
Slovenia	N/A
Spain	Be an active auditor.
Sweden	Be an authorised accountant FAR-SRS and statutory auditors for those who want to qualify as statutory auditor.
Switzerland	The mentor must be a professional auditor with enough working experience.

16. DOES YOUR MEMBER BODY IDENTIFY AND ASSIGN MENTORS TO INDIVIDUAL TRAINEES?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRE • IEC 	NO - The IRE/IBR strictly monitors if a person has met the mentor's criteria before appointing him/her and each mentor needs to be formally appointed. Institute identifies mentors but does not assign trainees to them.
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	NO
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	NO
Finland	N/A
France	YES
Germany	NO
Greece	NO - Verification of working experience by the Audit Firm.
Hungary	NO
Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAI • ICPAI 	YES NO
Israel	NO
Italy	NO - The mentor is chosen by the trainee.
Latvia	NO - Only experience under supervision of an active Certified Auditor is recognised.
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	NO
Netherlands	For at least two of the three years, a mentor must be a register accountant; the other year, the mentor also may be another expert.
Norway	NO - Any member is qualified.
Poland	NO
Portugal	NO
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	NO
Switzerland	NO - The employer does.
UK	NO

17. MUST THE MENTOR WORK IN THE SAME FIRM/ORGANISATION AS THE CANDIDATE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	YES
• IEC	NO - But it is strongly recommended and usual in practice.
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	YES
Finland	N/A
France	YES (it may be an exception – for 1 year)
Germany	YES
Greece	YES
Hungary	NO
Ireland	
• ICAII	YES
• ICPA	
Israel	YES
Italy	YES
Latvia	NO - Although mentor normally works in the same firm, theoretically the candidate can have a mentor from a different company/ firm, i.e., in the unlikely case of part-time auditing – since this is not forbidden. In any case, the trainee must have worked under supervision of that person and must receive approval of experience and a recommendation from the mentor.
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	YES
Malta	YES
Netherlands	NO (but exceptional)
Norway	YES
Poland	YES - For auditors; not necessary for accountants.
Portugal	YES
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	N/A
Spain	YES
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	YES
UK	
• ACCA	Ideally yes, but exceptionally a mentor may be appointed from outside the employing organisation provided they meet the requirements set for mentors and are familiar with the work of the trainee (as per IEPS 3).
• CIPFA	NO
• ICAS	YES
• ICAEW	YES

18. HAVE GUIDELINES THAT DEFINE THE MENTOR'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES BEEN DEVELOPED AND PROVIDED TO MENTORS?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	YES - See Comfort letter and model of "contrat de stage".
• IEC	YES
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	NO
Finland	N/A
France	YES - Part of the experience rules
Germany	NO
Greece	YES
Hungary	YES
Ireland	
• ICAI	YES
• ICPAI	NO
Israel	YES
Italy	
• CNDC	YES - Some guidelines are provided in the Professional Code.
• CNRPC	NO
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	YES
Malta	NO
Netherlands	YES
Norway	NO
Poland	NO
Portugal	YES
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	NO
UK	
• ACCA	YES - A guidebook, workshops and online video casts are available to mentors.
• CIPFA	NO
• ICAS	YES
• ICAEW	YES

19. ARE MENTORS REQUIRED TO UNDERGO RELEVANT EXPERIENCE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER	PERIODICAL EVALUATION OF MENTORS
Austria	NO	NO
Belgium		
• IRE	NO	NO
• IEC	NO	NO
Bulgaria	NO	NO
Cyprus	NO	NO
Czech Republic	NO	NO
Denmark	N/A	N/A
Estonia	NO	NO
Finland	N/A	N/A
France	NO ⁷	Each 6 months through quality control
Germany	NO	NO
Greece	NO	NO
Hungary	NO	NO
Ireland		
• ICAI	?	YES - A monitoring visit within a 3½ year cycle
• ICPAI	NO	NO
Israel	NO	NO
Italy	NO	NO
Latvia	NO	NO
Lithuania	NO	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO	NO
Malta	NO	NO
Netherlands	NO	YES - Traineeship offices, usually once a year
Norway	NO	Not specifically but through quality control
Poland	NO	NO
Portugal	NO	NO
Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One must attend 40 hours of continuous professional experience per year ▪ One must attend the professional meetings organised each year by the national practical experience controller who grants the conformity visa and recommends the maintenance or the withdrawal of the mentor's capacity. <p>The granting and the withdrawal of one mentor's capacity are decided upon by the CECCAR High Council.</p>	YES
Slovak Republic	NO	NO
Slovenia	N/A	N/A
Spain	NO	NO
Sweden	NO	NO
Switzerland	NO	NO
UK		
• ACCA	For audit only	NO
• CIPFA	NO	NO
• ICAS	YES	NO
• ICAEW	YES	YES

⁷ But the supervisor/controller, yes. A specific annual one day seminar (fully paid by the national institute of the Ordre des Experts-Comptables) is organised for them by the regional councils. It is compulsory for the new supervisor/controller and warmly recommended for the others. They also may ask for a specific experience on the e-learning tools.

20. DOES YOUR MEMBER BODY IDENTIFY SUITABLE EMPLOYERS FOR PROVIDING THE WORK EXPERIENCE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	YES - See question 5.
Belgium	
• IRE	NO
• IEC	NO
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	YES - Joint examination scheme with ACCA.
Czech Republic	YES - Suitable employer is an audit firm registered with the Chamber. Quality of such employer is assessed by i) registration itself and ii) supervision of the audit firms activities by the Chamber.
Denmark	NO
Estonia	NO
Finland	N/A
France	<p>This is the privilege of the local branch of the Institute (regional councils) on national criteria based on the 8th EU Directive. The employers providing work experience to the trainees must be authorised by the regional council. The main criteria are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to justify of a real activity in audit and assurance work; ▪ to submit to a quality control (peer review every 6 years); ▪ to certify that he will provide his trainee with a diversified professional activities including statutory audit and help him to comply with his obligations towards the institute and to prepare his final exam; ▪ to take part (recommendation) in meetings periodically by the regional council.
Germany	NO
Greece	YES
Hungary	NO
Ireland	
• ICAII	NO
• ICPA	
Israel	NO
Italy	NO
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	NO
Netherlands	YES - Traineeship officer has to meet certain standards.
Norway	NO
Poland	NO
Portugal	NO
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	YES
Spain	NO
Sweden	NO
Switzerland	NO
UK	
• ACCA	YES - Suitable employers are accredited through ACCA's Approved Employer programme. To date, approximately 7000 organisations have been accredited across Europe.
• CIPFA	NO
• ICAS	YES - Authorisation process for Experience Offices. An assessment by questionnaire and visit to organisation is made to establish the ability of the organisation to provide effective experience for CA Students.
• ICAEW	YES

- 21. ARE EMPLOYERS PROVIDED WITH GUIDELINES ON THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?**
22. IS A REVIEW PROCESS IN PLACE TO ENSURE THE CONTINUING SUITABILITY OF EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE THE WORK EXPERIENCE FOR TRAINEES/CANDIDATES/STUDENTS?
23. DO YOU HAVE GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE TRAINEE/CANDIDATE/STUDENT, THE MENTOR AND THE EMPLOYER?

COUNTRY	EXISTENCE OF GUIDELINES	EXISTENCE OF A REVIEW PROCESS	GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP
Austria	YES	NO	NO
Belgium	YES	NO	NO
• IRE	NO	NO	YES
• IEC			
Bulgaria	NO	NO	NO
Cyprus	NO	YES	NO
Czech Republic	NO	YES	YES
Denmark	NO	YES (declaration of employer)	NO
Estonia	NO	NO	NO
Finland	NO	NO	NO
France	NO	YES	NO
Germany	NO	NO	NO
Greece	YES	NO	YES
Hungary	YES	NO	NO
Ireland	YES	YES	YES (when defining mentor's role)
• ICAI	YES	NO	YES (experience record)
• ICPAI			
Israel	YES	YES	NO
Italy			
• CNDCC	NO	NO	NO
• CNRPC	NO	NO	NO
Latvia	NO	NO	NO
Lithuania	NO	NO	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO	NO	NO
Malta	NO	NO	YES (at admission to experience, the suitability of mentor/employer is assessed)
Netherlands	YES	YES	YES
Norway	NO	Yes (through quality assurance)	NO
Poland	NO	NO	NO
Portugal	YES	NO	YES
Romania	YES	YES	YES
Slovak Republic	NO	NO	NO
Slovenia	NO	YES	NO
Spain	NO	NO	NO
Sweden	NO	NO	NO
Switzerland	NO	NO	NO

COUNTRY	EXISTENCE OF GUIDELINES	EXISTENCE OF A REVIEW PROCESS	GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP
UK			
• ACCA	YES	YES ⁸	YES
• CIPFA	YES ⁹	YES	YES
• ICAS	YES	YES (reappraisal at 4 year intervals)	NO
• ICAEW	YES	YES (Reappraisal at 3-5 year intervals - or sooner if risk criteria are triggered)	YES

⁸ All ACCA Approved Employers are required to participate in ACCA's monitoring process undertaken by an ACCA representative visiting their office or remotely.

⁹ CIPFA provides employers with the Initial Professional Development Scheme guidelines

http://www.cipfa.org.uk/students/current/download/ipds_guide.pdf. CIPFA also has a not mandatory employer accreditation scheme which:

- acts as a means of recognising good practice amongst our employers
- Improves the services CIPFA offers our employers
- Establishes minimum and best practice standards for the level of support employers offer their CIPFA members and student members.

24. WHICH PARTIES PARTICIPATE IN DETERMINING THE WORK PROGRAM TO FULFILL THE EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT?

COUNTRY	MEMBER BODY	GOVERNMENT REGULATOR	MENTOR	EMPLOYER	TRAINEE
Austria		Y (law)			
Belgium ¹⁰					
• IRE			Y	Y	Y
• IEC	Y	Y			
Bulgaria				Y	Y
Cyprus ¹¹				Y	Y
Czech Republic ¹²	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Denmark	Y	Y			
Estonia			Y		Y
Finland ¹³		Y		Y	
France ¹⁴			Y	Y	
Germany		Y			
Greece	Y	Y		Y	
Hungary ¹⁵	Y				
Ireland					
• ICAI	Y		Y		Y ¹⁶
• ICPAI	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Israel		Y			
Italy			Y		
Latvia	Y				
Lithuania			Y		Y
Luxembourg (IRE)			Y	Y	Y
Malta	Y				
Netherlands ¹⁷	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Norway			Y	Y	Y
Poland	Y				
Portugal	Y		Y		
Romania	Y		Y	Y	Y
Slovak Republic			Y		
Slovenia	Y			Y	
Spain	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Sweden		Y	Y	Y	Y
Switzerland			Y	Y	

¹⁰ Agreement between these three parties.

¹¹ A Student Experience Record (STR) needs to be completed and signed

¹² Obligation to fulfil the experience requirement is determined by the Act on Auditors. The Chamber issued internal regulation on the process of the gaining and documentation of practical experience requirements. In accordance with this regulation, mentor, in the co-operation with the trainee is obliged to prepare work program of the practical experience. This program must be fulfilled and documented by the trainee on a monthly basis and adjusted by the mentor twice a year. Completed record of the practical experience is submitted to the Chamber for the final assessment.

¹³ Candidate must in his/her application for KHT examination provide employer's reference of working experience

¹⁴ Under the supervision of the regional council; role of the supervisor/controller nominated by the regional council.

¹⁵ The mentor – based on the requirements issued by the Chamber – prepares the work program for the candidate personal, break down yearly.

¹⁶ ICAI = 6 monthly review

ICPAI = The Institute provides guidance on experience in 6 areas of competence in the Experience Record.

The Regulator requires that those wishing to obtain a practicing certificate, must follow a certain experience path, i.e. those trainees must have 36 months continuous practical experience under the direct supervision of an approved registered auditor. At least 24 months of this must be obtained after admission as a member.

The mentor / employer / trainee agree an experience plan and are advised to have quarterly reviews to monitor progress and plan for the period ahead.

¹⁷ See NIVRA guidelines.

COUNTRY	MEMBER BODY	GOVERNMENT REGULATOR	MENTOR	EMPLOYER	TRAINEE
UK					
• ACCA	Y	Y ¹⁸	Y	Y	Y
• CIPFA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• ICAS ¹⁹	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
• ICAEW	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

¹⁸ Audit only.

¹⁹ ICAS - The government regulator defines requirements to be satisfied in respect of audit qualification. ICAS prescribes certain areas of work experience which are essential and must be provided in every experience contract. The mentor, employer and trainee will work together to determine the type of work experience which achieves the requirements of the achievement log.

25. HOW IS PROGRESS MEASURED AND DOCUMENTED?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	Written or oral exam.
Belgium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRE • IEC 	Examination and monitoring of the practical experience records by the member body. Control of the electronic traineeship records by the Member Body.
Bulgaria	N/A
Cyprus	Through STR forms (work logs) done by trainee and employer.
Czech Republic	See question 24.
Denmark	N/A
Estonia	Not regulated.
Finland	Not regulated.
France	Work logs and 6 monthly activities reports; controlled by the mentor and supervisor/controller.
Germany	Practical experience must be obtained before sitting the professional examinations. The candidate must submit a certificate from his/ her employer containing the experience gained before being admitted to sit the exams. In this way, the relevance, suitability and sufficiency of practical experience is monitored. The employer performs this role.
Greece	The employer delivers a certificate based on work logs controlled by the member body.
Hungary	The mentor prepares yearly an assessment, and the candidate prepares a self-assessment. These documents – and a work program as well - will be reviewed and accepted by the Admission Committee of the Chamber.
Ireland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAI • ICPAI 	CA Diary of Professional Development by mentor. Experience Record for CPA Students (Experience Record) and annual experience summary and sign-off by trainee and supervisor.
Israel	Mentor sends reports to the Council.
Italy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNDC • CNRPC 	The trainee must present to his Local Branch, every 6 months, a report (underwritten by his mentor) in which he describes the subjects he has handled and the practical experience acquired during the period. Each Local Branch evaluates the report presented by the trainee and approves it. The Local Branch's committee may also invite the trainee for an interview on his progress and knowledge of the issues he has stated to have learnt. The trainee must keep a practical experience booklet that must be numbered and endorsed (signed) by the Local Branch. The trainee keeps record of any and all activities and tasks carried out during his/her practical experience to which form part of the object of the profession, as also any theoretical-practical matters of particular interest in which he took part or was a witness. This performed by the mentor must be presented to Local Branch every year.
Latvia	Mentor decides.
Lithuania	Depends on policies and procedures of the audit firm.
Luxembourg (IRE)	Appraisals and work logs completed by the mentor.
Malta	Applicant documents the attainment of competences and achievements of objectives.
Netherlands	Files containing year plans and semester reports, essays logs, etc. reviewed by NIVRA.
Norway	Normal staff appraisal.
Poland	See the answer to the question 24 (the National Council of Statutory Auditors takes resolutions and sends them to the Ministry of Finance. All the bodies of the National Chamber of Statutory Auditors are obliged to submit adopted resolutions to the Minister of Finance within 30 days from the date of their approval. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the supervision over the National Chamber of Statutory Auditors. He may, in particular, lodge an appeal to the Regional Court in Warsaw against resolutions of the bodies of the National Chamber of Statutory Auditors which violate the law or its statute, within 30 days from the date when the resolution has been submitted. Should the Minister of Finance appeal against resolutions adopted by the bodies of the National Chamber of Statutory Auditors, which violates the law or the statute of the National Chamber of Statutory Auditors, the implementation of these resolutions shall be suspended).
Portugal	OROC Practical Experience Committee has a file on each trainee semester reports, annual evaluation, any individual remarks about the trainee and an evaluation of the trainee made by the Commission.
Romania	Written experience, paper, quarterly reports, record of results.
Slovak Republic	By mentor.
Slovenia	N/A
Spain	To do the exam, candidate shall submit employer certification of the work done.
Sweden	Regular report and IREC test. The test helps to ascertain the candidate's practical and theoretical needs before the final examination and the test is discussed with the mentor.
Switzerland	By mentor/employer.

26. TO WHOM DOES THE MENTOR REPORT PROGRESS AND FINAL ASSESSMENTS?

COUNTRY	TRAINEE	EMPLOYER	MEMBER BODY	OTHER
Austria				No mentor
Belgium				
• IRE	Y		Y	
• IEC	Y		Y	
Bulgaria				No mentor
Cyprus	Y	Y	Y	
Czech Republic			Y	
Denmark				No mentor
Estonia				Not regulated
Finland				Not regulated
France			Y	Final exam jury
Germany	Y	Y		
Greece		Y	Y	
Hungary			Y	
Ireland				
• ICAI	Y	Y	Y	
• ICPAI	Y	Y	Y	
Israel				Auditors' Council (regulator)
Italy				
• CNDC			Y	
• CNRPC			Y	
Latvia	Y		Y	
Lithuania	Y		Y	
Luxembourg (IRE)	Y	Y		Ministry of Justice
Malta			Y	
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y	
Norway	Y	Y		
Poland	Y	Y		
Portugal			Y	
Romania	Y		Y	
Slovak Republic			Y	
Slovenia				N/A
Spain	Y	Y	Y	
Sweden		Y		
Switzerland		Y		
UK				
• ACCA	Y	Y	Y	N/A
• CIPFA ²⁰				
• ICAS	Y		Y	
• ICAEW		Y	Y	

²⁰ CIPFA - The assessor reports on the assessment to the student in person at the time of the final interview. Subsequently, CIPFA informs the student in writing of the assessment outcome and, where necessary, areas of improvement to bring the portfolio up to the required standard.

27. ARE THE WORK ASSIGNMENTS, LEVEL OF SUPERVISION AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES IN ADHERENCE WITH THE EMPLOYER'S SYSTEM OF QUALITY CONTROLS?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	YES
Belgium	
• IRE	YES
• IEC	NO
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	YES
Czech Republic	YES
Denmark	YES - To be implemented in the quality control system of the firms.
Estonia	Not regulated.
Finland	NO
France	YES
Germany	YES
Greece	YES
Hungary	NO
Ireland	
• ICAI	NO
• ICPAI	There is a wide diversity of experience environments for CPA trainees. Up 40% train in public practice, mainly small to medium practices, and the balance are experience in industry. Those experiences in industry are in relevant employment representative of the whole spectrum of economic activity in Ireland. Where possible, the Institute recommends that students and mentors leverage off the internal quality controls of the trainee's employer with respect to supervision and assessment strategies, provided these are satisfactory within the context of the guidance on pages 1 to 5 of the Experience Record.
Israel	YES
Italy	
• CNDC	YES
• CNRPC	YES
Latvia	YES
Lithuania	YES
Luxembourg (IRE)	YES
Malta	NO - Since individual employers have different levels of supervision and assessment strategies, the Institute is unable to determine whether these are in adherence with the Institute's expectations.
Netherlands	YES - Also fit in the company HRM system.
Norway	YES
Poland	YES - Quality assurance system which also cover practical experience.
Portugal	YES - Mentor's responsibility.
Romania	YES
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	NO
Spain	YES - Quality assurance of the firm.
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	Responsibility of the employer.
UK	
• ACCA	YES - See references to ACCA's Approved Employer programme, above.
• CIPFA	YES - CIPFA's Initial professional Development is designed to ensure practical application of knowledge in a real workplace, so the employer's systems will be applied to the work carried out by students. Quality assurance of the standard of the portfolios themselves follows CIPFA's requirements. The assessor's assessments are also externally quality assured to CIPFA's standards on CIPFA's behalf.
• ICAS	YES
• ICAEW	YES - The employer will often have very sophisticated systems that will have been taken into consideration when deciding whether to authorise them as an authorised experience organisation. However, the employer must abide by the Institute's experience standards when developing students.

28. HAS A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO ENSURE THAT THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE IS RELEVANT, THAT THE LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT GOALS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED AND THAT THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IS EFFECTIVE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	NO
• IEC	NO
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	YES - The relevant issues of the process improvement are continuously discussed in two Chamber Committees – in the Committee for the professional issues and in the Committee for pre-qualification education and exams. They are some important impulses for these discussions: changes of legislation (including the EU legislation), IFAC IESs, connected guidelines, discussion papers and other IAESBA materials and experience from audit firms. Conclusions agreed in the Committees are submitted to the Chamber Council which decides about concrete steps of quality assurance and enhancement.
Denmark	NO
Estonia	Not regulated.
Finland	NO
France	?
Germany	NO
Greece	YES
Hungary	NO
Ireland	YES
Israel	YES - Usually on a voluntary basis most CPA firms have their own procedures.
Italy	NO
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	Responsibility of the mentor.
Malta	NO
Netherlands	YES - Yearly inspection of traineeship office.
Norway	NO
Poland	YES
Portugal	YES - Practical Experience Committee is responsible.
Romania	YES - Annual review by CECCAR.
Slovak Republic	YES
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	YES
Switzerland	Responsibility of the employer.
UK	
• ACCA	YES - ACCA continually reviews its qualification to ensure that it is relevant and meets the needs of employers. Based on previous history, ACCA operates on a five to seven-year cycle. However, the exact timing will be driven by the rate of change in the accounting environment. All employers who apply for approval are required to commit to a series of best practice experience statements which are summarised in the approved employer assessment matrix. This approval is renewed on a three yearly cycle and is subject to a monitoring process.
• CIPFA	YES - Regular update.
• ICAS	YES - Annual review of achievement logs.
• ICAEW	YES - The overall qualification, including its work-based learning elements, is kept under constant review and is frequently updated.

29. ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR DIFFICULTIES/OBSTACLES YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED THAT YOU CAN SHARE WITH THE IAESB TASKFORCE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	NO
• IRE	YES - Practical constraints limited to number of trainees, number of exams and tests during the experience period.
• IEC	
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	NO
Denmark	NO
Estonia	NO
Finland	NO
France	?
Germany	NO
Greece	NO
Hungary	NO
Ireland	NO
Israel	NO
Italy	NO
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	NO
Netherlands	NO
Norway	NO
Poland	NO
Portugal	NO
Romania	NO
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	NO
Switzerland	NO
UK	<p>The current ACCA position on access to a qualified mentor is contingent on a number of factors. The challenges here are those of considerable logistical and accessibility concerns, given ACCA's reach and trainee numbers, where some trainees may not have access to a qualified accountant within their employer. Another challenge ensuring that there is consistency of interpretation and application of the practical experience requirements, due to varying cultural norms and understandings. To resolve this ACCA have worked closely with employers and implemented monitoring to try and ensure that supervisors are all applying the competence requirements to the same standard.</p> <p>Another area in which ACCA has encountered difficulties is in the consistency of interpretation and application of the practical experience requirements, due to varying cultural norms and understandings. To resolve this ACCA have worked closely with employers and implemented monitoring to try and ensure that supervisors are all applying the competence requirements to the same standard.</p> <p>Employer support is very variable, with some employers leaving giving students too little responsibility for planning their Initial Professional Development and other providing too little support; students find it difficult to master reflective writing and portfolio management; and the assessment process is time consuming and expensive for CIPFA to operate, particularly in view of each candidate having an interview.</p> <p>Variability in student interest, consistency of mentor review</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offering the qualification outside the UK and the European Union has required us to consider which overseas qualifications we will accept for the mentor role and also to establish a process for assisting the mentor where he/she is not an ICAEW member. 2. Establishing experience outside the UK has raised the question of how students may gain the required experience in company audit in order to come to the UK in the future as statutory auditors. 3. Offering the qualification outside the UK and European Union has brought us into markets where there is less understanding of the need for supervised work place learning, and where other bodies place less emphasis on this part of professional qualification.
• ACCA	
• CIPFA	
• ICAS	
• ICAEW	

30. ARE THERE ANY PARTICULAR ELEMENTS OF YOUR EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT THAT YOU HAVE FOUND TO BE ESPECIALLY BENEFICIAL FOR TRAINEES/CANDIDATES/STUDENTS?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	NO
• IEC	Electronic traineeship record.
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	NO
Denmark	NO
Estonia	NO
Finland	NO
France	?
Germany	NO
Greece	NO
Hungary	NO
Ireland	
• ICAI	ICAI's trainees gain very beneficial experience under the Experience Contract.
• ICPAI	
Israel	NO
Italy	NO
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	NO
Netherlands	The traineeship board considers writing of essays and a final thesis as very valuable / of beneficial for trainees. (Not all trainees share this opinion).
Norway	NO
Poland	YES - A minimum 2-year's period time of the work directly with a statutory auditor.
Portugal	NO
Romania	NO
Slovak Republic	NO
Slovenia	NO
Spain	YES - Specific experience for mentors.
Sweden	NO
Switzerland	NO
UK	
• ACCA	The practical experience requirements have proved particularly beneficial when trying to assess personal effectiveness and management and professional skills that are not able to be tested in the examinations themselves. Such skills are of increasing importance in the modern workplace and by monitoring them through practical experience requirements ACCA is ensuring its students and members are more rounded professionals. Secondly, forging a closer link between mentor, trainee and professional body has helped to improve the quality of training.
• CIPA	Reflective writing is a beneficial tool for lifelong self development; the scheme provides an excellent grounding for CPD; students find the interview feedback beneficial; and practical elements such as presentation skills are valued by students and employers alike.
• ICAS	Matching member body requirements to employer requirements.
• ICAEW	Completing work experience/development and professional examinations at the same time, which helps to develop a more rounded and successful trainee.

31. ARE THERE ANY IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES YOU BELIEVE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN THE GUIDELINE?

COUNTRY	ANSWER
Austria	NO
Belgium	
• IRE	NO
• IEC	NO
Bulgaria	NO
Cyprus	NO
Czech Republic	NO
Denmark	NO
Estonia	NO
Finland	NO
France	?
Germany	NO
Greece	NO
Hungary	NO
Ireland	?
Israel	NO
Italy	Minimum trainee wage issues and mentor/employer's relationship with the trainee.
Latvia	NO
Lithuania	NO
Luxembourg (IRE)	NO
Malta	NO
Netherlands	NO
Norway	YES - The Guideline should acknowledge that the practical experience requirements are not always administered by the member bodies. In Norway the authorisation of public accountants is undertaken by a governmental institution, the Financial Supervisory Authority of Norway.
Poland	NO
Portugal	NO
Romania	NO
Slovak Republic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare examples of methodology tools: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Competence map, which should identify education development needs; 1.2 Education plan to meet education and development needs and find ways how to meet such needs. 2. Provide in writing a template guideline for audit firms on practical experience program, their roles and responsibility. 3. Provide example of methodology aimed at verification of practical experience, whether such experience match the audit work needs. 4. Provide example of methodology for final assessment of professional skills and competence of audit profession candidates. 5. "Example of test" to verify the quality of knowledge gathered in continuous education of auditors (continuous testing for one-year period). 6. Provide example of methodology "Pre-entry requirements before accepting candidates as audit assistants" – testing of pre-entry requirements.
Slovenia	NO
Spain	NO
Sweden	NO
Switzerland	NO
UK	
• ACCA	NO
• CIPFA	NO
• ICAS	NO
• ICAEW	Focus on less mature accountancy bodies.