

International Advanced Level

Subject: Accounting

The need for Transferable Skills

Sources: Cognitive/Intrapersonal and Interpersonal skills adapted and taken from the NRC framework

In recent years, higher education institutions and employers have consistently highlighted the need for students to develop a range of transferable skills to enable them to respond with confidence to the demands of undergraduate study and the world of work. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines skills, or competencies, as ‘the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task and can be built upon and extended through learning’.

To support the design of our qualifications, the Pearson Research Team selected and evaluated seven global 21st-century skills frameworks. Following on from this process, the team identified the National Research Council’s (NRC) framework as the most evidence-based and robust skills framework, and have used this as a basis for our adapted skills framework.

The framework includes cognitive, intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills. These skills have been interpreted to ensure they are appropriate for this subject. All of the skills listed are evident or accessible in the teaching, learning and/or assessment of the qualification.

Identifying and highlighting these skills in International Advanced Level qualifications ensures that it is not only the academic and cognitive skills that are developed, but those broader elements that universities highlight as being essential for success. Skills such as self-directed study, independent research, self-awareness of own strengths and weaknesses and time-management are skills that students cannot learn from a textbook but have to be developed through the teaching and learning experience that can be provided through an international curriculum.

In the tables below, we have taken the NRC framework skills and provided definitions of how each skill can be interpreted for this subject. This will enable teachers and learners to understand examples of how they can develop each skill through an International Advanced Level qualification.

Intrapersonal skills		Interpersonal skills		Cognitive skills	
Intellectual Openness		Teamwork and collaboration		Cognitive Processes and Strategies	
Adaptability	Understanding that different business setups have different needs and adapting accounting technique to meet these needs.	Communication	Using written and verbal responses to accounting problems. To communicate your point of view to others and be able to listen to other people’s opinions and perspectives.	Critical thinking	Using many different sources of accounting information and synthesising this information to arrive at a solution to an accounting problem.
Personal and social responsibility	Writing information that you are accountable for.	Collaboration	Being to work with others on accounting projects and share the workload.	Problem solving	Selecting and deploying relevant material in order to construct a response to accounting problem or issue posed as a matter for judgment.
Continuous Learning	Planning and reflecting on your own aims and goals and setting new targets as and when required.	Teamwork	Working with other students to research issues in accounting.	Analysis	Analysing the text material found in the Resource Booklet given in the exam. Analysing the text and figures in the Resource booklet and making choices as to the relevance of that data when answering the questions.
Intellectual interest and curiosity	Undertaking a research that takes you away from the scope of the syllabus. This can include wider reading of the subject.	Co-operation	Sharing resources and own answers with other students.	Reasoning/argumentation	Constructing a reasoned argument in a piece of writing to support a considered judgment about an accounting issue or about advising on an accounting problem.
Work ethic/conscientiousness		Interpersonal skills	Using verbal and non-verbal communication skills within a discussion.	Interpretation	Identifying and interpreting data to draw conclusions as well as identifying explicit and implicit meaning from data.

Initiative	Showing a willingness to undertake self-motivated tasks and lines of enquiry that go beyond the given parameters of the syllabus.
Self-direction	Planning and carrying out research under your own direction.
Responsibility	Taking responsibility for your own work, correcting any omissions or errors and creating a plan to improve them.
Perseverance	Seeking new ways to improve your work despite any setbacks you come across. Re-draft any work that is not at your target minimum grade.
Productivity	Writing effectively to meet deadlines but maintaining the high standards you are capable.
Self-regulation (metacognition, forethought, reflection)	Developing strategies over-time like using mark schemes to check your own understanding and progress on the course.
Ethics	Developing an awareness of the ethical values in society and also in accounting. Understand the importance of accurate recording of accounts and the impact this can have on the different stakeholders.
Integrity	Taking ownership of your own work and willing to respond to questioning about your methods and there appropriateness.
Positive Core Self Evaluation	
Self-monitoring/self-evaluation/self-reinforcement	Developing a strategy for planning, completing and reviewing all the work that is set. Be able to be self-critical and realistic about your performance and how you could improve your own work.

Empathy/perspective taking	Explores the values and attitudes of other people in the group and analyse the way different people view accountancy.
Negotiation	Discussing answers to exam questions in a group and deciding which is the correct answer and why.
Leadership	
Leadership	Lead a team in an accountancy task.
Responsibility	Taking responsibility for some part of a task within a group and sticking to the agreed deadlines.
Assertive communication	Directing the task, pushing the group forward and encourage all members of the group to be active through verbal and non-verbal communication.
Self-presentation	Presenting the outcome of ratio analysis of a particular to a group and present your findings.

Decision Making	Making a choice or a decision in terms of an essay or selecting the correct information to use to answer the question.
Adaptive learning	Responding to material provided in the exam (no pre-release data is given) and adapting their knowledge to the needs of the question. Understanding that different types of business require different accounting techniques and adapting their learning accordingly.
Executive function	Carry out a full set of accounts for a chosen business, so being to plan the workings out for that business and complete the examined question.
Creativity	
Creativity	Showing creative interpretation of the data that has been given and offering solutions to business and accounting problems.
Innovation	Innovation is limited when it comes to the layouts of the accounts and they tend to follow a set order. However, generating ideas on how a business could improve its financial position could lead to new ideas.