

MACQUARIE
UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF
BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

**Division of Economics and Financial Studies
Department of Accounting and Finance**

**MASTER OF ACCOUNTING
(CPA EXTENSION)**

UNIT GUIDE

ACCG908

CPA – Strategic Management Accounting

Semester 1 2010

Unit Convenor Elisabeth Burn

Department of Accounting & Finance www.accg.mq.edu.au
Master of Accounting www.accg.mq.edu.au/postgraduate/quicklinks

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF ECONOMICS AND FINANCIAL STUDIES
UNIT GUIDE

Students in this unit should read this unit outline carefully at the start of semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult one of the teaching staff in the unit.

ABOUT THIS UNIT

Unit Description

This unit provides knowledge, principles, skills and an appreciation of the strategic nature of Management accounting in an increasingly competitive global business environment. It presents an overview of strategic management accounting as well as the techniques needed to be able to formulate, implement a strategy, and assess the success of a strategy. This is facilitated through structured formal academic support for full time students concurrently enrolled in the Master of Accounting (CPA Extension) program, and the Strategic Management Accounting segment of the CPA program.

Unit rationale

The aim of this unit is to provide students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills in strategic management accounting which are vital for all contemporary accounting practitioners involved in management decision making. In addition, the unit aims to extend the generic skills program in the post-graduate diploma segment of the MAcc, by further developing practical problem solving skills, and communicating in a group setting.

Prerequisites and professional requirements

Students must successfully complete the 13 units in the Master of Accounting (Professional) at Macquarie University before commencement of the final six units in the Master of Accounting (CPA Extension) program.

TEACHING STAFF

Lecturer

Elisabeth Burn (unit convenor)
Patrick Gallagher

Email

elisabeth.burn@y7mail.com
patrick.gallagher@efs.mq.edu.au

Student Consultation

Student consultation in relation to any question about the course content or related issues can be facilitated by emailing the lecturer or during class times.

MACC Office Telephone: 9850 6271

CLASSES

The timetable for classes can be found in this guide and on the University web site at: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/>.

Compulsory attendance at classes is required and we will meet on scheduled dates for a 3 hour seminar during the semester with your lecturer. Note that in some weeks no classes are scheduled – in those weeks ALL students are required to work through the relevant module(s) in the CPA program, CPA104 segment module, as well as work on assessment tasks.

You will be allocated a class to attend and you must attend that class. Class changes will only be allowed where requested through and approved by the MACC office. Rolls will be marked in class and attendance recorded. Any student who misses more than 5 classes will be awarded a Fail grade in this unit.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS

Prescribed Reference Materials

All students should have the following provided from CPA Australia

- CPA Program: *CPA 104 Strategic Management Accounting*, Deakin University, Geelong.

Students can also access additional materials via CPA Online learning. Details regarding this can be obtained within the CPA program guide made available to students upon enrolment with CPA. Students are encouraged to utilise this material.

Other References

Students will be required to use library resources to research beyond these materials in undertaking research necessary to complete their presentation assignments.

The CPA 104 course materials have a reference list at the end of each module containing all references cited by the author. These provide some guidance to references that could be used to research an assignment on a particular issue.

UNIT WEB PAGE

Blackboard is the location for all web based materials provided in this unit. Log on at www.learn.mq.edu.au.

The unit Web site is only available to students enrolled in ACCG908. Students will be able to access the unit web page by the use of their normal university user/password details.

Please contact the IT Help Desk in the Library if you have any difficulties accessing the unit web page:

Phone: (02) 9850 HELP (4357) or Freecall: 1800 063 191

Face to Face: IT Help Desk, Level 1, University Library

Email: Just Ask. Form <http://www.lib.mq.edu.au/justask/>

24/7 Email: ithelp@mq.edu.au

The Website will contain important unit materials including:

- Course details—An outline of the unit
- Announcements—notices updating students on important matters regarding the unit
- Lecture slides.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Learning objectives

The overall aims of this segment, as outlined in the CPA Segment Outline, are:

- To promote an understanding and appreciation of:
 - the development of contemporary management accounting and the key factors that have led to the changing focus
 - the techniques for implementing and monitoring strategies
 - the impacts of strategic management on the business cycle
 - how the value chain can create organisational efficiencies
 - the characteristics of effective performance measures, including strategic and operational performance measures
 - the range of techniques available to manage and reconfigure the value chain, their components and drivers
 - the link between organisational strategy and project selection.

- To extend management accounting skills by enabling successful candidates to:
 - participate in the design of management accounting systems which play a critical role in the value chain and business cycle
 - participate effectively in the management of projects.
- To reinforce the role of the management accountant as a management participant who adds value to the organisation (including public and not for profit organisations) through the use of various management accounting techniques (including the value chain).

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes of this unit are that successful students should possess the knowledge, skills and understandings of strategic management accounting which are vital for all contemporary accounting practitioners involved in management decision making.

In addition, the unit aims to extend the generic skills program in the post-graduate diploma segment of the MAcc by further developing practical problem solving skills and effective communication in complex managerial forums.

Successful students should also demonstrate professional level abilities in the following areas:

- Self-awareness and interpersonal skills;
- Communication skills
- Problem-solving skill
- Lifelong learning and motivation

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

Your class will meet on scheduled dates for a 3 hour seminar during the semester. In between classes (and also in weeks where classes are not scheduled) you are required to work through the relevant module(s) in the CPA program, CPA104 segment module, as well as work on assessment tasks.

Check Blackboard each week before class for any last minute changes to class content, times or locations. Please note that you MUST NOT change between classes of each lecturer as in any week classes may not be exactly in parallel as each lecturer will carry course progress in minor ways consistent with the professional needs of students in each class (also due to the impact of public holidays on classes).

In each class there will be a Lecture/Seminar on issues involving the relevant content from the CPA104 Module topics. Lectures will last about 2 to 2.5 hours and, to lessen your in-class writing burdens, notes will be provided in advance on the *Blackboard* system (formerly WebCT). The address is <http://learn.mq.edu.au>.

Students can access the Web site for ACCG908 from either their home/office (via modem) or at University computers. In addition to lectures there will be in-class activities of various types, including assessed student work, for the balance of each 3 hour class period.

For each module, PowerPoint lecture notes will be placed on *Blackboard* before the class. They are NOT intended to, nor do they stand alone nor do they in any way replace compulsory lecture attendance and FULL READING OF THE CPA Modules. They are provided for your convenience. You must also properly construct your own notes based on your own readings and you are expected to note and record any additional comments, supplements and corrections to these notes which WILL occur during lectures – which you MUST attend.

CRITICAL COMMENT: You are not entitled to rely on lecturer provided notes for full study purposes nor most importantly can they be taken as being a defined indicator of CPA exam content.

Please see the schedule of classes and topics in Appendix 1 at the end of this Unit Outline.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Method of Assessment

Assessment in this unit is rigorous and if you are to succeed you MUST work consistently through the entire semester. Your Macquarie University assessment is at the highest postgraduate standard and your work must reflect these standards in order to succeed.

(a) Short answer quiz (in-class)	10%
(b) In-class Minor Presentation of M/C question	10%
(c) Multiple Choice Exam	30%
(d) Group 'Case Study' Presentation and Paper	20%
(e) CPA Examination	30%
	100%

The modes of assessment are designed to ensure that students have professional understandings of the subject areas and the ability to identify and document issues and to design and document problem solutions. Students are required to demonstrate the ability to undertake these tasks alone (exams and minor presentations) and as part of building team-based solutions (Group Presentation and Paper).

SNG Result

Student Results for the course will consist of a Standardised Numerical grade (SNG) expressed as a number between 0 and 100, and a grade denoted by a letter HD, D, Cr, P, PC, or F.

To be eligible to obtain a pass grade or better, it is necessary to:

- **Attend all scheduled classes AND**
- **Satisfactorily complete ALL assessment components, AND**
- **Obtain a PASS in the CPA external examination, AND**
- **Obtain a PASS for the 70% Macquarie University assessment of the unit (that is, (a) to (d) above).**

(a) Short Answer Quiz (10%)

A 25 minute short answer quiz (closed book) will be required to be completed by students in week 5 based on module material from Module 1 and Module 2 including readings and appendices. Marks will be provided to students in week 7.

(b) In-class Minor Presentation (10%)

Early in the semester a schedule of presentation times will be set for every student, using the CPA104 materials, to prepare and write themselves one UNIQUE and NEWLY DEVELOPED multiple choice question and to present this to the class along with a clear explanation of the correct answer. This will provide 10% of your assessment marks in this unit. The presentation should be approximately 5 minutes in duration.

This Minor Presentation may require you to undertake additional research, reading and thought, and you will be marked on the quality of the work that was undertaken.

You will be marked on the basis of quality of presentation, including the level of research and preparation, your understanding, accuracy, comprehensiveness, ability to explain the key issues to your fellow students, innovation in explaining complex issues including numeric modelling, and your GOOD use of presentation aids. [IF YOU ARE USING OVERHEADS YOU MUST USE AT LEAST A 20 POINT FONT FOR OVERHEADS]. Generally, you are expected to display your knowledge and the communication skills at a standard expected of a postgraduate student.

A 'MINOR PRESENTATION' FEEDBACK SHEET is attached to this Unit Guide (Appendix 3) and it gives you an indication of where to concentrate your work. The sheet will be handed back to students providing marks in week 11.

(c) Multiple Choice Exam (30%)

This exam will be drawn from all Modules of CPA104 and will provide a strong assessment component in the unit and an opportunity for you to trial your skills in a multiple choice exam scenario. The exam is open book. The exam paper and results will be reviewed in the class immediately following the exam. This will represent a strong feedback and revision opportunity. Due to the nature of this exam, attendance is compulsory and no other times for sitting will be available. Marks will be provided to students in week 11.

(d) Group Case Study Preparation and Presentation (20%)

In this assessment task, your lecturer will become facilitator and assessor only. YOU will take responsibility for all aspects of developing a Group Case Study – the ideas, the group’s preparation, and the group’s presentation and communication skills. Details will be discussed around weeks 3/4 of the semester. At that time groups will be finalised and general approaches discussed. The fundamental approach is that of taking full professional responsibility.

As a group (groups will normally comprise around 5 to 6 students) you will be required to define as a “Case Study” a strategic management accounting problem and to discuss the issues and approaches required to reach strategic and operational solutions. You may use any of the methods discussed in the CPA104 materials – and you are encouraged to research beyond those materials in order to score an excellent mark. Your group is expected to be innovative in both the Case Study definition (with the best approach being one that leads to realistic definition of problems) and in utilising management accounting techniques and communication skills to reach a solution. You will be expected to present your group’s Case Study to the class late in the semester. Case Study activity will expect inclusion of the concepts and issues that have developed in the unit up to the date of your Case Study presentation. Case Studies **MUST BE FULLY WRITTEN UP AND HANDED IN AS A SINGLE DOCUMENT AT THE TIME OF YOUR PRESENTATION** – documentation must include references relating to your research and sources. This document should be 2000 words excluding data and/or appendices

As this Case Study activity is deliberately ‘open ended’ it really provides you with a unique opportunity to build or find an interesting problem that will form the basis of your Case Study and to ‘solve’ the problem(s) from a strategic management accounting viewpoint. You will be free to communicate with your lecturer as you develop the problem – but you must resolve the approach to problem resolution yourself. Communication and effective approaches to persuading management (in this case your Class) will be crucial in order to obtain good marks.

You will be required to hand in your written Case Study and solution as well as a copy of all presentation and communication aids. The presentation is to be no longer than 15 minutes. You will be marked on the overall quality of your work, your presentation and

the effectiveness of your communication of the problem in the presentation. The quality of the written, handed in document will also be marked as part of the 20% assessment.

For further details refer to Appendix 2 of this guide.

GROUP MARK ALLOCATION. In all normal circumstances the group mark will be the same for all group members. Group members are required to sign the MQU Group Presentation cover sheet. If, in any group, there are complaints that a group member has not contributed approximately equally then the complaint will need to be reported in writing to the Lecturer. Following such a report the whole group will meet with the Lecturer to discuss the issue and the Lecturer may re-allocate marks appropriately. In the event that any group member does not attend such a meeting then the necessary re-allocation decision will be made on the basis of discussions with those who do attend.

Marks will be provided to students on Blackboard, two weeks after the presentations are finalised.

(e) CPA Examination (30%)

The CPA Examination will take place at times specified by CPA Australia. Students are advised that the CPA examination is conducted by CPA Australia and in accordance with their rules and regulations. It is the responsibility of students to be aware of the rules and requirements of CPA Australia, the venue and time for the examination.

PLAGIARISM

The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. You must read the University's practices and procedures on plagiarism. These can be found in the *Handbook of Undergraduate Studies* or on the web at: <http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/>

The policies and procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.

DETERMINATION OF OVERALL GRADE

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines on the distribution of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG).

On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. Under the Senate guidelines, results may be scaled to ensure that there is a degree of comparability across the university, so that units with the same past performances of their students should achieve similar results.

It is important that you realise that the policy does not require that a minimum number of students are to be failed in any unit. In fact it does something like the opposite, in requiring examiners to explain their actions if more than 20% of students fail in a unit.

The process of scaling does not change the order of marks among students. A student who receives a higher raw mark than another also receives a higher final scaled mark.

For an explanation of the policy see

<http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/Guidelines2003.doc> or
<http://www.mq.edu.au/senate/MQUonly/Issues/detailedguidelines.doc>.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

Further, CME (formerly NCELTR) staff conduct workshops which focus on study skills and writing skills specifically for MAcc students, see www.accg.mq.edu.au/ss/macc/timetables for the timetable.

Other University services available include (note these operate on a SEMESTER basis):

WRITING SKILLS PROGRAM:

The Writing Skills Program is open to all Macquarie students and offers:

- FREE short courses on essay writing in weeks 6-10 each semester
- FREE individual consultations on academic writing (by appointment).

For more information check the website at

http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/support/writing_skills/index.htm

**COMMUNICATION FOR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES
(CAPP):**

The CAPP Program is open to all Macquarie students who have a language background other than English. It offers:

- FREE workshops on pronunciation and grammar
- FREE individual 30 minute consultations on academic writing (by appointment)
- units for credit on academic writing and research skills (CAPP100 and CAPP101)

For more information check the CAPP Noticeboard (C5A Level 5) at the start of semester or contact: jean.brick@ling.mq.edu.au

INTERNATIONAL STUDY SKILLS ADVISER:

The International Study Skills Adviser offers:

- FREE individual or small group consultations on academic writing (by appointment)
- FREE workshops run throughout semester on topics such as:
 - Understanding and Preparing Assignments
 - Improving Academic Writing
 - Proofreading Techniques
 - Essay Writing; Report Writing; Referencing

For more information check the website at:

<http://www.international.mq.edu.au/StudentServices/StudySupport/index.html>.

APPENDIX 1
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND TOPICS

Week	Week Beginning	Classes	Presentation
1	8th February	Introduction Course outline and assessment CME : Business Communication Workshop	
2	15th February	Seminar Module 1 Management Accounting: Supporting the Value Creation Process	
3	22nd February	Seminar Module 2 Creating Organisational Value	Minor 1
4	1st March	Seminar Module 2 continued Creating Organisational Value	Minor 2
5	8th March	Short answer quiz (in class, 10% of marks) Seminar Module 3 Managing Performance Measures	
6	15th March	Seminar Module 4 Techniques for Managing Value	Minor 3
7	22nd March	Seminar Module 4 continued Techniques for Managing Value	Minor 4
8	29th March	Seminar Module 5 Project Management	Minor 5
9	5th April	Case Studies Module Revision	Minor 6

10	12th April	No Classes – Study Week	Study Period
	Saturday 17th April	Multiple Choice Exam – 30% of marks	
11	19th April	Multiple Choice Examination Review Revision and review of exam and subject module material and discussion re presenting and writing a case study	
12	26th April	No Classes – CPA Exam Period	Study Period
13	3rd May	No Classes – CPA Exam Period CPA Exam 5 th May	Study Period
14	10th May	Group Case Study Presentations	Major
15	17th May	Group Case Study Presentations	Major

APPENDIX 2
GROUP CASE STUDY ASSESSMENT TASK (20%)
GUIDELINES

Task Objective

This is a group activity for students to apply a SMA tool/method/concept discussed within this subject, to an “issue”, “opportunity” or “problem” confronting an actual organisation.

Students are to be creative in their approach to this task. For example, students may select a company that has a known problem (as researched in the media etc) which can be addressed by a SMA concept. Or, it may be a case that students see an “opportunity” to apply SMA concepts to a company that will enhance its performance etc.

Task “Audience”

The scenario is that each group is a “firm” of consultants that is to present its research and findings to a senior management group of the subject company (ie your lecturer and colleague students).

Subject Organisation

This is at the discretion of each group. It may be either an international or Australian organisation – profit or not-for-profit. It does not need to be a publicly listed company. For example, it may be a student’s own “family” company.

In the absence of close knowledge of a private company, it is recommended that a public, stock exchange listed company is used as the subject organisation as there is a far greater amount of information available (for example, see asx.com.au)

Content

There are three components of the assessment task and equal weighting will be given to each:

- The quality, realism and validity of the defined “issue” being addressed, and, of the chosen SMA concept being applied to the subject organisation
- The physical presentation (verbal and visual)
- The report

The Presentation

The presentation is to the “senior management group” of the subject company.

The duration of the presentation should not exceed 15 minutes. **This will be strictly applied.**

Not all students within the group need to present. For example some may have undertaken relatively more work in the research phase for the group. However, a minimum of 3 students need to present a component of the presentation.

Marks will be awarded based on the following criteria:

- Presentation clarity generally (e.g. of the “issue”, work undertaken, and, findings/recommendations).
- Presentation structure and how well each student links with each other i.e. it is ONE presentation, not a collection of individual student presentations
- How well the group communicates with its audience (e.g. language, style)
- Quality and use of the visual presentation material (e.g. PowerPoint slides etc)

A copy of visual materials should be handed to the lecturer for marking purposes immediately before the presentation.

The Report

The report is to be 2000 words long excluding numerical data and appendices. This is the written report that may be read by members of the senior management group in their own time.

The format of the report should be:

- Title Page (also include student names and IDs)
- Executive Summary (an overview of the purpose, approaches taken, findings and recommendations)
- Table of Contents
- Background (why and how you will approach the “issue”)
- Discussion (this can be headed however you wish – you may have multiple headings depending on what work you have undertaken.)
- Recommendations
- References
- Appendices

This report is to be handed in immediately before the presentation

APPENDIX 3

MINOR PRESENTATION FEEDBACK AND INDICATIVE MARKS

This sheet will be used to give you your feedback for your minor presentations. You should prepare carefully recognising the things we will be looking for in your preparation and presentations. Remember, *you* are helping to build study skills for yourself and your fellow students so careful thought, communication and understanding are vital for good marks!

Family Name _____ First Name _____ Called _____

Student Number _____

Presentation Day & Time _____ Minor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Lecturer _____

Your indicative mark as a percentage _____

Note that your indicative mark will be subject to adjustment (upwards or downwards) as all students' marks are standardised across all groups to lead to an overall average of between 65% and 80%.

THE STANDARD AT WHICH YOU PERFORMED (rating will be circled)

a+ = Outstandingly High (High Distinction plus level) a = High (Distinction level)
b = Above Average (Credit level) c = Average (High Pass level) d = below average (needed more work to achieve good Pass) e = well below average (equates to a fail for poor or no performance)

Quality of MATERIALS a+ a b c d e

Identification of TOPIC DIFFICULTIES a+ a b c d e

EXPLANATION a+ a b c d e

Extent of demonstrated UNDERSTANDING a+ a b c d e

DEPTH of materials covered a+ a b c d e

Apparent PREPARATION and Reading a+ a b c d e

Other Comments:
