

The New Certification Program FAQs

March 2023

1. What is the new CPA Certification Program?

The new CPA Certification Program determines how the new [Competency Map](#) will affect the CPA certification and education process, including where, when and how the skills and competencies laid out in the new Competency Map will be learned and assessed.

It's an exciting opportunity to modernize the certification model and build an attractive, inclusive and innovative Certification Program that protects the public and meets the diverse and evolving needs of learners, the market and governments.

Work on the new Certification Program is currently in the design and consultation phase; no final decisions have been made on format, assessments or micro-credentials.

2. Why are you making this change now?

Data governance, artificial intelligence, machine learning and other innovative sectors have created new areas of opportunity where professional accountants can excel, provided they have the right skills. Future CPAs need to be agile, adaptable and highly skilled while also providing the assurance and ethical lens that is critical to ensuring organizations successfully manage these developments. In addition, we have seen - and will continue to see - changes that require CPAs to use new skills and add value in new ways when analyzing environmental and social performance measures, such as diversity, equity and inclusion.

There is both a need and opportunity to ensure that CPAs continue to be perceived as leaders in Canada's future economy and society while maintaining strengths in traditional accounting competencies, coupled with a core focus on protecting the public.

3. How will this impact current students/candidates studying for their CPA designation?

It is important to note that all current students/candidates will be supported in the completion of the current Certification Program. Once a new program has been developed and approved, those who have not completed the current program will have reasonable paths to do so and will be well supported to transition to the new Certification Program.

4. Will there still be a Common Final Examination (CFE)?

Work on the new Certification Program is currently in the design and consultation phase. During this phase, we are considering how we will run assessments, but currently no decisions regarding the CFE have been made.

If, once the program is confirmed, there is a decision to change how we run assessments, the CFE would remain during a period of transition beyond 2025.

5. Will the practical experience reporting tool (PERT) still be used?

Work on the new Certification Program is currently in the design and consultation phase. No decisions on PERT have been made, but we do know that practical experience and its reporting will remain a vital part of the new program.

6. Will micro-credentials be introduced in the new Certification Program?

No decisions have been made regarding micro-credentials, as work on the new Certification Program is currently in the design and consultation phase.