



**Professional Education  
for SAI Auditors - PILOT**  
Professional Auditor. Professional SAI.



# Assessment Report



The Professional Education for SAI Auditors - Pilot first exam sitting was held Tuesday 20th September to Thursday 6 October 2022. Assessment exams were sat either at a Pearson Vue test Centre or where this was not available at a venue outside of the SAI on the Pearson Vue 'OnVue' system with online proctoring.

Exam results are as follows:

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Passed</b>	<b>Will receive a certificate of competence</b>
Candidates	466		<b>184 (39%)</b>
Cross Cutting Exams	460	283 (62%)	
Compliance Audit Exams	114	64 (56%)	45 (39%)
Financial Audit Exams	189	73 (39%)	62 (33%)
Performance Audit Exams	163	90 (55%)	77 (47%)
<b>Exams delivered (CC, CA, FA and PA)</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>510 (55%)</b>	

After the exams were sat by PESA-P candidates the examining team met to discuss the papers and moderate the results. Overall, the exams were felt to be challenging but fair assessing the learning objectives communicated throughout the course. In a small number of cases, questions were felt to include some ambiguity, and, in these cases, the team gave the candidates the benefit of the doubt and awarded the marks to the candidate.

### Cross Cutting Exams

**Highest Mark: 94**

**Lowest Mark: 22**

	<b>Total exams</b>	<b>Passed (number)</b>	<b>Passed (percentage)</b>
Cross Cutting Exams sat by CA Candidates	113	63	58%
Cross Cutting Exams sat by FA Candidates	185	115	62%
Cross Cutting Exams sat by PA Candidates	162	105	64%
<b>Total Cross Cutting Exams</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>62%</b>

The vast majority of candidates completed the exam by answering all questions. In the exam 2.5 mins was allowed on average to answer each question. Typically, the participants spend longer on questions attached to case studies and those with multiple responses required. This suggested good time management by candidates. However, there were instances of candidates spending 15 mins on one question with no case study attached. This indicates poor use of exam time where questions are equally weighted.

Content Category	Max Scored Questions in Content Area	Total Scored % Correct
Case 1: Value and benefits of SAIS	5	61%
Case2: ISSAI 100	5	63%
Case 3: Ethics	5	53%
Case 4: Communication and stakeholder analysis	5	68%
Standalone questions	15	59%

There were some very strong candidates in the cross-cutting stream with the highest mark of 94%. Overall participants performed well on questions relating to communication and stakeholder engagement. Participants performed well on questions relating to ISSAI 100 and the fundamental audit principles. Questions with mirroring to the other parts of the syllabus (CA, FA and PA) went well suggesting that participants had built competency throughout the education.

The weakest area was Case 3 on ethics and ISSAI 130 where candidates were asked to analyse an ethical scenario and answer questions relating to the situation. Challenges in this area may come from difficulties in analysing the information and answering the resulting questions. Candidates are recommended to practice analysing the ethical situations in the materials and identifying the key elements within the scenarios.

Questions that created the most challenges for participants across the paper were those that applied the education to different scenarios. In these questions candidates were asked questions that created an audit scenario and asked them to make a professional judgement (i.e. 'If you are here, what would you do?'). In these questions candidates struggled to answer the questions asked, they tended to give answers that reflected generic principles rather than application to the situation in hand. Question focus could be improved by further practice of this type of question and candidates are recommended to practice questions (at the end of the modules and in the mock exam) and then analyse the explanation given to understand WHY an answer is correct.

## Compliance Audit

Highest mark - 86%

Lowest mark - 48%

Narrowest range of marks. Less popular stream.

Participants struggled most with questions relating to internal control and Risk.

Participants struggled least with questions on reporting and audit procedures.

The table below presents the percentage of correct answers by case study and standalone questions.

Content Category	Max Scored Questions in Content Area	Total Scored %Correct
Case 1	8	64%
Case 2	20	59%
Standalone questions Paper 1	6	56%
Standalone questions Paper 2	7	62%
Standalone questions Paper 3	6	55%
Standalone questions Paper 4	10	63%
Standalone questions Paper 5	4	57%

## Financial Audit

Highest mark - 83%

Lowest mark - 28%

For financial audit, 189 candidates did the exam. Some candidates did quite well and scored more than 70%. The highest mark was 83% and the lowest was 28%.

The financial audit exam proved the most challenging. Some candidates proved to be very able scoring more than 80% in the exam. Financial audit candidates also performed well in the cross-cutting exam. 62% of 185 Financial Audit candidates passed the cross-cutting exam. This suggests that we have a good calibre of financial audit candidates. However, the pass rate (39%) is below that of other streams perhaps reflecting the complex requirements in ISSAIs for financial audit and their application in audit practice.

The table below presents the percentage of correct answers by case study and standalone questions.

Content Category	Max Scored Questions in Content Area	Total Scored %Correct
Case 1: Pre-engagement activities	5	43%
Case 2: Risk assessment	5	62%

Case 3: Analytical procedures throughout the audit	10	50%
Case 4: Auditor's response to risks	10	54%
Case 5: Gathering evidence	5	53%
Case 6: Reporting and follow up	5	56%
Standalone questions Paper 1: Introduction, Concepts and Principles of Financial Audit	5	52%
Standalone questions Paper 2: Pre-engagement	1	75%
Standalone questions Paper 3: Planning and risk assessment	8	63%
Standalone questions Paper 4: Conduct a Financial Audit	5	43%
Standalone questions Paper 5: Completion, Reporting and Follow-up in Financial Audit	1	53%

Overall, the FA candidates performed well on the standalone questions relating to pre-engagement activities. The risk assessment is one of the technical areas in the financial audit, yet the candidates performed well on case study questions.

On specific areas:

- Candidates struggled with multi-part questions (e.g the true\false type) where they had to select more than one option.
- Candidates struggled with questions relating to designing and performing audit procedures, i.e. Tests of controls and Substantive Audit Procedures (tests of details and substantive analytical procedures) specifically identifying which audit procedures to use when in the given scenario.
- Participants did well with questions on audit reporting and financial audit concepts, and principles.
- Participants did reasonably well on questions about risk assessment and identifying internal control activities.

## Performance Audit

Highest mark - 88%

Lowest mark - 18%

For performance audit, 163 candidates did the exam. This audit stream had the biggest interval between the highest and the lowest score. Some candidates went quite well and scored more than 80%. The highest mark was 88% and the lowest was 18%.

The vast majority of candidates completed the exam by answering all questions. In the exam 2.5 mins was allowed on average to answer each question. Typically, the participants spent longer on questions attached to case studies and those with multiple responses required. This suggested good time management by candidates. However, there were instances of candidates spending more than 10 mins on one question. This indicates poor use of exam time where questions are equally weighted.

The table below presents the percentage of correct answers by case study and standalone questions.

Content Category	Max Scored Questions in Content Area	Total Scored %Correct
Case 1	15	61%
Case2	15	58%
Case 3	15	59%
Standalone questions – Paper 1 (Concepts, principles and process)	4	70%
Standalone questions – Paper 2 (Tools and techniques)	2	87%
Standalone questions – Paper 3 (Performance audit planning)	2	52%
Standalone questions – Paper 4 (Conducting a Performance audit)	2	63%
Standalone questions – Paper 5 (Performance audit report and follow-up for impact)	5	66%

Overall participants performed well on standalone questions relating to performance audit tools and techniques. The reason might be that most tools are not difficult to understand. The challenge comes when they are applied during the audit. These questions would appear in the case studies.

The weakest area was related to audit planning, especially on questions about audit criteria and audit questions. Challenges in this area may reflect the fact that planning a performance audit requires specific competencies and skills and involves different activities. The marks can improve if the candidates review the education material related to the audit planning phase.

The average of correct questions related to the case studies is 59%. Though each case study question was about a specific topic, the cases contained questions related to all papers, requiring from the candidate a systemic thinking that covers the whole audit process. That might be the reason why the scores were lower for the case study questions than for the standalone questions (with exception of the questions about audit planning).

The candidates struggled with numeric questions. Probably because performance auditors, in general, don't use quantitative aspects in their audit methodology.

Participants also struggled with multi-response questions, where they had to select more than one option. For these questions, the mark was given only when the participant chooses all the correct options therefore participants are advised to think about each option carefully and separately.