



The Governance
Institute

ICSA qualifying programme

Student transition policy 2018/19

23 January 2018

The student transition policy sets out the principles on which students on the current qualifying scheme syllabus, who do not complete their studies by June 2019, will move across to the new syllabus in order to complete their ICSA qualification.

It has been created to inform and guide the actions of the ICSA team, current and future students, tuition partners and qualification sponsors.

New syllabus overview

- The new syllabus consists of seven modules of learning, each assessed by a single three hour examination. A Foundation Programme is also being introduced, more details of which are below. See page 6 for a visual summary of the new syllabus.
- The new syllabus is one module shorter than the current syllabus, however each of the seven new modules requires a minimum of 200 learning hours – 50 hours on average more than each module on the current syllabus. This change maintains parity between the two syllabi and meets the international standard for qualifying.
- The new syllabus is more streamlined. There is one module for each subject, including in law and finance. These are both currently covered in two modules.
- The new syllabus features two new modules which cover new subject areas, *Risk Management* and *Boardroom Dynamics*. There are no equivalents to these modules in the current syllabus.
- The new syllabus does not contain a final level case study paper.
- Modules on the new syllabus are to be completed by level, starting with the Foundation Programme or Part One modules, as appropriate, and culminating in Part Two.

Timing and notice

- The new syllabus for the ICSA qualifying programme will be introduced, and the current syllabus withdrawn, in summer 2019 after the examination session in June. The first examinations of new syllabus modules will take place in November 2019.
- Students and tuition partners will be given three full examination sessions' notice of the syllabus change to provide maximum opportunity for students to either complete their studies on the current syllabus or plan a smooth transition from one syllabus to another in order to complete their qualification.
- These arrangements follow two principles – the need to maintain parity between both the current and the new syllabi and the need to meet the ICSA international standard. These principles are fundamental to maintaining the value and integrity of the qualification.

Module mapping for student transition

- On the current syllabus, two Stage One modules have direct equivalents in the new syllabus. *Corporate Law* maps directly to *Company Law* and *Corporate Governance* maps to the new *Corporate Governance* module. The alternative governance module, *Health Service Governance*, also maps across to the new *Health Service Governance* module in the new syllabus. Students who have passed these current modules, can continue to count them towards their qualification and do not need to take them in the new syllabus.

- On the current syllabus, the Stage One module *Financial Reporting and Analysis* is the equivalent of 50% of the finance module, *Interpreting Financial and Accounting Information*. Students who have passed *Financial Reporting and Analysis* on the current syllabus will be guided to take the current Stage Two module *Financial Decision Making*, within the next three exam sessions. This is also equivalent to 50% of the new finance module. Together, both current finance modules map directly to the new finance module and students who hold them both do not need to take *Interpreting Financial and Accounting Information* in the new syllabus.
- On the current syllabus, the Stage One module, *Applied Business Law* does not map onto the law module of the new syllabus. As there is no equivalent module in the new syllabus, students with more than four modules to complete are advised not to take *Applied Business Law*, and concentrate instead on completing *Corporate Law, Corporate Secretarial Practice, Strategy in Practice and Corporate Governance*. Students who have passed *Applied Business Law*, and who can complete their qualification in the next three examination sessions, should simply proceed to study their outstanding modules as *Applied Business Law* will count as part of their qualification. Students who have not passed *Applied Business Law*, but who are able to complete the current syllabus by June 2019, should proceed with entering for the *Applied Business Law* examination as the module will count towards their qualification.
- On the current syllabus, two Stage Two modules have equivalents in the new syllabus. *Corporate Secretarial Practice* maps to the new syllabus module *Company Compliance and Administration*. *Strategy in Practice* maps directly to the equivalent new syllabus module *Development of Strategy*. Students who have passed these modules in the current syllabus can continue to count them towards their qualification and do not need to take the equivalents in the new syllabus.
- On the current syllabus, the Stage Two module *Financial Decision Making* is the equivalent of 50% of the finance module, *Interpreting Financial and Accounting Information* in the new syllabus. Students who have passed *Financial Decision Making* on the current syllabus will be guided to take the current Stage One module *Financial Reporting and Analysis* within the next three exam sessions. This is also equivalent to 50% of the new finance module. Together, both current finance modules map directly to the new finance module and students who have passed them both do not need to take *Interpreting Financial and Accounting Information* in the new syllabus.
- The *Chartered Secretaries Case Study* paper on the current syllabus does not have an equivalent module on the new syllabus. Students who would be eligible to take the case study in their next exam session after the new syllabus has been introduced (November 2019) will be required to take the *Boardroom Dynamics* module instead in order to complete the qualification.
- See page 7 for a visual summary of how the current syllabus content maps to the new syllabus modules.

A new Foundation Programme

- A new Foundation Programme will be available from July 2018 for those who do not have related qualifications and experience. It will be assessed in a single three hour examination paper.
- The Foundation Programme is being introduced to provide students with a better and more secure entry point to Part One of the ICSA qualifying programme. It does this by developing students' understanding of the business environment, finance, law and compliance in order to underpin their further learning. Students entering the qualification via this route will need to pass this exam before starting any of the Part One qualifying programme modules.
- From 3 April 2018 onwards, the open entry route onto the ICSA qualifying programme will no longer be available. Students who may have previously taken this route, and who do not meet the new entry requirements, will be required to pass the new Foundation Programme first before progressing to Part One of the new qualifying programme.
- Students who pass the Foundation Programme will receive a Foundation Certificate to mark their achievement. Students who do not pass the Foundation Programme will have the opportunity to retake the examination.

Exemption routes

- The current exemption rules for entry on the related degree entry route (for those with qualifications in law, finance) and the professional entry route (for qualified accountants and lawyers with requisite experience) will still apply to students starting their studies at any point under the new syllabus.
- Other related qualifications or experience may exempt students from the requirement to complete the Foundation Programme. This would include students who hold: an ICSA Diploma in International Finance and Administration (IFA L5)/ICSA Diploma in Offshore Finance and Administration (DOFA); an HND in Business, Law or Finance; or any other degree (not law or finance) together with five years' relevant experience in a company secretarial or governance role.
- The fast track professional exemption route which requires two modules in the current syllabus is still under review. Students wishing to study on the fast track professional route in 2018 will be able to complete their qualification on the current syllabus by June 2019. Full information about what this route will involve will be available after the June 2018 examination session.

Post-nominals

- ICSA is introducing a new designation of Chartered Governance Professional which will be available in addition to the designation of Chartered Secretary, to students passing the ICSA qualifying programme on the current and the new syllabus with appropriate experience. The date from which this will be available is subject to the

approval of the Privy Council. More details on this will be shared with students and stakeholders as soon as is possible.

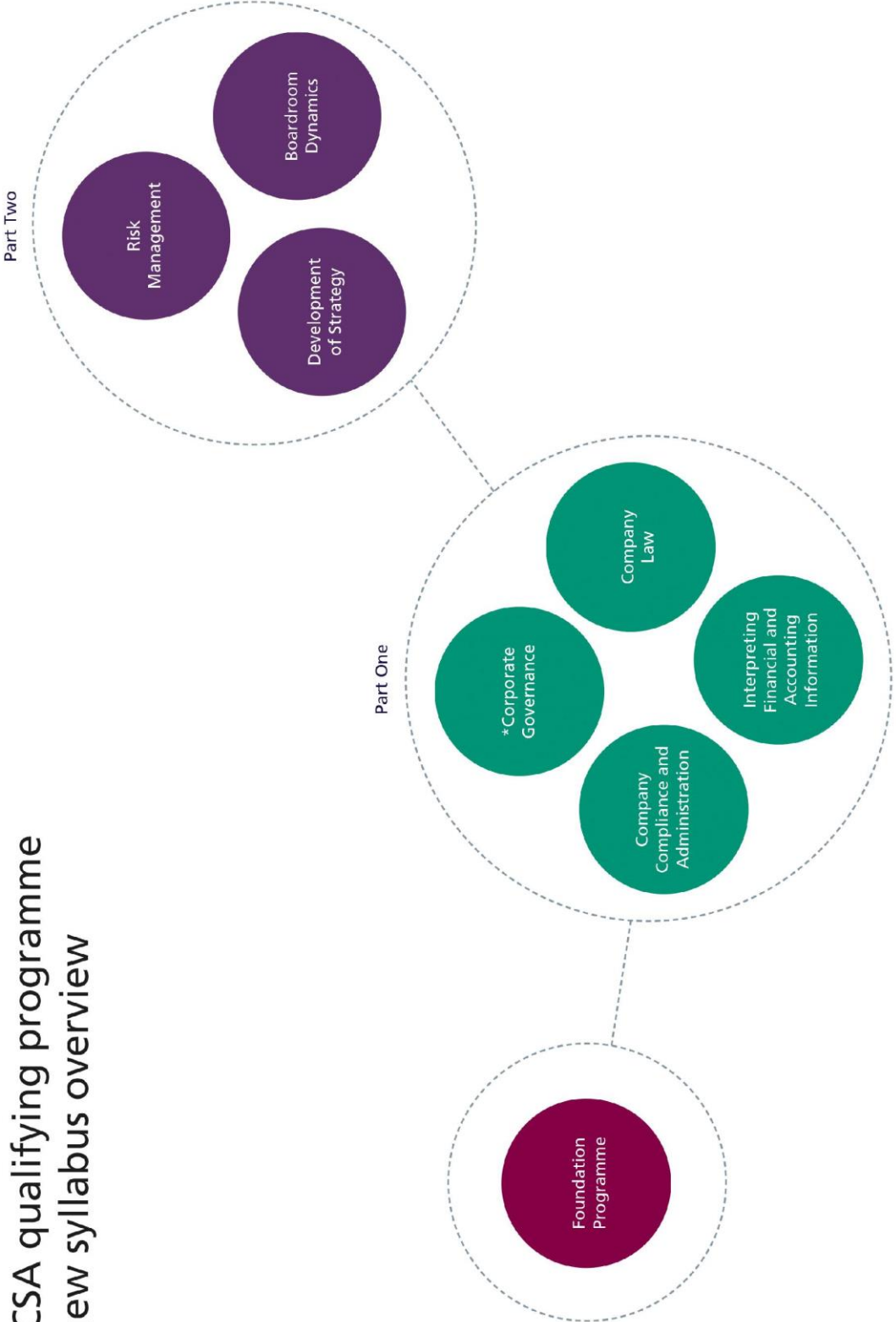
Support and advice

Further information is available on the ICSA website: www.icsa.org.uk/qualupdate

Students with queries should contact our student support team on studentsupport@icsa.org.uk or +44 (0) 20 7580 4741

Tuition partners with queries should contact Martyn Jones, Senior Qualifications Manager, on mjones@icsa.org.uk

ICSA qualifying programme new syllabus overview



* Equivalent modules available in Health Service Governance and Not-for-Profit Governance

ICSA qualifying programme syllabus map

