

# New CMA Exam | by Kim R. Wallin, CMA, CFM, CPA

IMA will have a new and enhanced CMA exam starting in July! One of the functions of the ICMA Board of Regents is to ensure that our CMAs have the skills that will keep them on the cutting edge of business practices. As

the business environment changes, so do the requisite skills of our profession, and the CMA and CFM exams must reflect those changes. Thus, the new exam will test for the groups of skills and abilities that managerial finance and accounting professionals use to analyze, manage, and evaluate real business situations. If you hold the CMA or CFM, you already have demonstrated that you have what it takes to be an operations-focused decision maker and an integral part of a successful management team. Our goal is to have everyone in the business community understand that a CMA is proof of competence across a broad spectrum of business skills.

Though the majority of the new exam's content will remain the same as that of the current exam, you'll see increased emphasis on Strategic Planning with more focus on manufacturing paradigms and business process performance. The only new topic is Strategic Marketing, which requires an understanding of basic marketing theories and processes.

The four parts of the new exam are:

**Part 1: Business Analysis**—You will be tested on business economics, global business, internal controls, quantitative methods, and financial statement analysis.

**Part 2: Management Accounting and Reporting**—You need to understand budget preparation, cost management, information management, performance measurement, and external financial reporting.

**Part 3: Strategic Management**—You will be tested on strategic planning, strategic marketing, corporate finance, decision analysis, and investment decisions.

**Part 4: Business Applications**—All topics from Parts 1, 2,

and 3 will be included, as well as organization management and communication, behavioral issues, and ethical considerations. This part will require written responses to more closely reflect live business situations where a written or oral response is expected.

Parts 1, 2, and 3 will be available July 1, 2004. They will be offered year-round, and questions will still be in objective format and graded immediately. But you must pass all three before you can sit for Part 4. Part 4 will be available in February 2005 and will only be offered in the second month of each quarter. It will consist of business-oriented essays and problems that will be graded within 30 days of the close of the testing month.

You will have four years to complete all parts of the new exam. Current exam parts can't be transferred to the new exam, so if you are in the CMA program now and have already passed a part, you must complete this exam by December 31, 2007.

Review courses for the new exam will be available from our current providers. IMA's own CMA review course for the new exam will be available next month.

We will also continue to update the CFM. The ICMA is currently performing a practice analysis of the corporate financial management profession. When it is complete, they will make changes to the CFM exam as well. Effective March 1, 2004, the CFM will be renamed Certified Financial Manager.

There is no better time than now to get your CMA. As always, keep in touch, and let me know when you will be taking that challenge. [kwallin@imanet.org](mailto:kwallin@imanet.org)



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