

MEDIA RELEASE

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First timers achieve a 78% pass rate in the first SAICA qualifying examination

Johannesburg, Friday 25 March 2022 – Today, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) announced that 1 739 (a 59% pass rate compared to 64% in 2021) of the total candidates who wrote the first sitting of the 2022 Initial Test of Competence (ITC) passed. Of those, candidates writing for the first time achieved an outstanding 78% pass rate compared to 70% in 2021.

The ITC is the first of two professional Qualifying Examinations aspiring chartered accountants [CAs(SA)] must pass on their journey to achieving the CA(SA) designation. Written twice a year, the ITC tests candidates' ability to apply technical competence gained during the SAICA accredited academic programme which consists of a undergraduate and a postgraduate programme.

The ITC assesses candidates' ability to evaluate underlying problems in various scenarios and, through critical thinking, apply technical knowledge gained through the academic programme. To pass, candidates must obtain an overall pass mark of 50% and must achieve a sub-minimum of at least 40% in three of the four professional papers.

"The prospective CAs(SA) who passed the January ITC have much to be proud of," said Freeman Nomvalo, SAICA's CEO. "These candidates have faced many challenges over the past two years, including adapting to blended teaching and learning methodologies during the COVID-19 restrictions. We congratulate the candidates for achieving an overall pass rate of 59% and are particularly pleased with the results of candidates who wrote the ITC for the first time as this group achieved a pass rate of 78%. In contrast, candidates who were repeating the ITC only achieved a 17% pass rate. These candidates were impacted, among others, by the 2021 second sitting being moved to September following delays to the 2020 academic year because of COVID-19 restrictions. This meant that results for the second 2021 ITC sitting were released at the beginning of November, a mere three months before candidates had the opportunity to retake the ITC in January 2022."

"While we celebrate the overall results for the January ITC sitting, SAICA continues to be concerned about the significant gap in pass rates between African and other race groups especially White candidates. SAICA discusses the pass rates at the undergraduate, postgraduate and ITC levels with each SAICA accredited institution annually and they are required to put specific action plans in place to address the anomalies. In addition, SAICA commissioned Independent Research, due to be completed mid-2022, to further unpack the issues and find appropriate solutions," added Nomvalo.

The racial demographics of the January 2022 ITC results are as follows:

Demographics	FAIL	PASS	TOTAL	%PASS
African	836	609	1445	42%
Coloured	54	95	149	64%
Indian	182	270	452	60%
White	131	757	888	85%
Demographic not disclosed	4	8	12	67%
Grand Total	1207	1739	2946	59%

Detailed statistics can be found on the SAICA website: www.saica.org.za.

Thuthuka students continue to shine

Despite the above, it is pleasing to note the inroads SAICA is making through its Thuthuka Bursary Programme. Thuthuka funded students achieved a 76% pass rate in the January 2022 ITC sitting. This is significantly higher than non-Thuthuka funded African and coloured candidates.

A phenomenal 29 candidates passed with honours

As stated earlier, candidates must obtain an overall mark of 50% to pass the ITC. Yet some exceeded, with 29 candidates in the January 2022 sitting achieving 75% or more for the examination, therefore achieving a pass with honours. Included in the 29 are those candidates who earned a spot in SAICA's prestigious Top Ten candidate list.

The Top Ten candidates are:

Place	Name	Surname
1	Lauren	Tsafandakis
2	Hans-Peter	Fechter
3	Caleigh	Robson
Joint 4 th	Michael	van Schalkwyk
	Carla	Botes
6	Petra	Laubscher
7	Dillon	Ribeiro
8	Priyanka	Padayachee
Joint 9 th	Bennert	van Schalkwyk
	Robert	Searle

In conclusion, Nomvalo extended SAICA's congratulations to the successful candidates and reminded those who were unsuccessful that their journey is not over: "On behalf of the profession, I am proud to congratulate each and every one of the successful candidates for their hard work and determination. To the unsuccessful candidates, I encourage you not to give up and to continue working hard and to learn from this setback. Enrol in one of the support programmes available in the market and stay true to your dream of becoming a CA(SA). We look forward to welcoming you all into the profession when you reach the required qualification milestones."

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Notes to Editor

About SAICA

SAICA, South Africa's pre-eminent accountancy body, is widely recognised as one of the world's leading accounting institutes. The Institute provides a wide range of support services to more than 53 000 members and associates who are chartered accountants [CAs(SA)], as well as associate general accountants [AGAs(SA)] and accounting technicians [ATs(SA)], who hold positions as CEOs, MDs, board directors, business owners, chief financial officers, auditors and leaders in every sphere of commerce and industry, and who play a significant role in the nation's highly dynamic business sector and economic development.

What is the ITC and what does it measure?

The ITC examination is the first of two SAICA professional Qualifying Examinations that university graduates must pass to become a CA(SA). Written twice a year, the ITC tests the integrated application of technical competence that candidates develop during the academic programme (which consists of a three-year undergraduate programme and a one-year postgraduate programme). The ITC assesses how well a candidate evaluates the underlying problems in each scenario and, through logical thinking, applies the theoretical knowledge they have gained at university.

To pass, candidates must obtain an overall pass mark of 50% (and must get a sub-minimum of at least 40% in three of the four professional papers).

About SAICA's transformation initiatives:

One of SAICA's prime goals is to contribute towards strengthening the country's economy by playing a significant and leading role in transformation and skills development. Through Thuthuka, a pioneering initiative to promote transformation in the profession, SAICA launched its transformation efforts in the Eastern Cape in 2002 and has grown this into a national project that includes various interventions across the education value chain as well as the highly successful Thuthuka Bursary Fund.

Thuthuka's objective is to transform the demographics of the profession to reflect those of the country in terms of race and gender, and provide educational support to African learners and students for the benefit of the profession, while simultaneously helping to uplift communities. Therefore, SAICA prides itself in leading the chartered accountancy profession as a socially responsible driver of business and skills development by supporting and encouraging enterprise development initiatives.