

The New Certification Program FAQs

May 2024

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. Is the new CPA Certification Program still expected to start in 2025?

No, the earliest it is expected to be available is early 2027.

The current CPA Certification Program will continue to be offered until the new education program is available. This includes the offering of the CFE during a transition period.

4. Why is the timeline changing for the new CPA certification program?

The profession set an ambitious timeline to have the new CPA Certification Program in market in 2025, but finalizing a new model for the program has taken more time than expected.

We are revising our timeline, being mindful that accredited post-secondary institutions will likely need two years to implement any necessary changes. Accordingly, we anticipate the earliest the new program will be available is early 2027.

5. Is this timeline change the result of national conversations between CPA Canada, CPA Ontario, and CPA Quebec?

No. The timeline change is a result of the work needed to finalize the new model. Until the new model is available, students across the country, including those in Ontario and Quebec, will complete the current program.

6. 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.

7. 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 2027.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. Where can I get information and when will more information be available?

Updates will be shared on CPALeadstheWay.ca as they become available. Alternatively, please contact your local provincial, territorial, or Bermudian CPA body.