

CIMA

Chartered Institute of
Management Accountants



“CIMA enabled me to
qualify without mountains
of student debt.”

Siân Jones
The Global Travel Group



“CIMA’s broader
business focus is
attractive to me.”

Ambrose Cheung
Barclays Capital

The CIMA Professional Qualification

Getting started



“CIMA is about
looking at the numbers
and doing something
about them.”

Jonathan Power
Iron Mountain



“The CIMA
qualification is well
recognised internationally
and management
accounting is a fast
growing profession.”

Modupeola Adelowo
Food Standards Agency

www.cimaglobal.com/2010

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CIMA

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Welcome to CIMA

Welcome to the CIMA Professional Qualification
www.cimaglobal.com/2010

This welcome pack provides every new CIMA student with an overview of the qualification and the support available to help you make your first step on your journey towards the CIMA Professional Qualification.

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The CIMA Professional Qualification

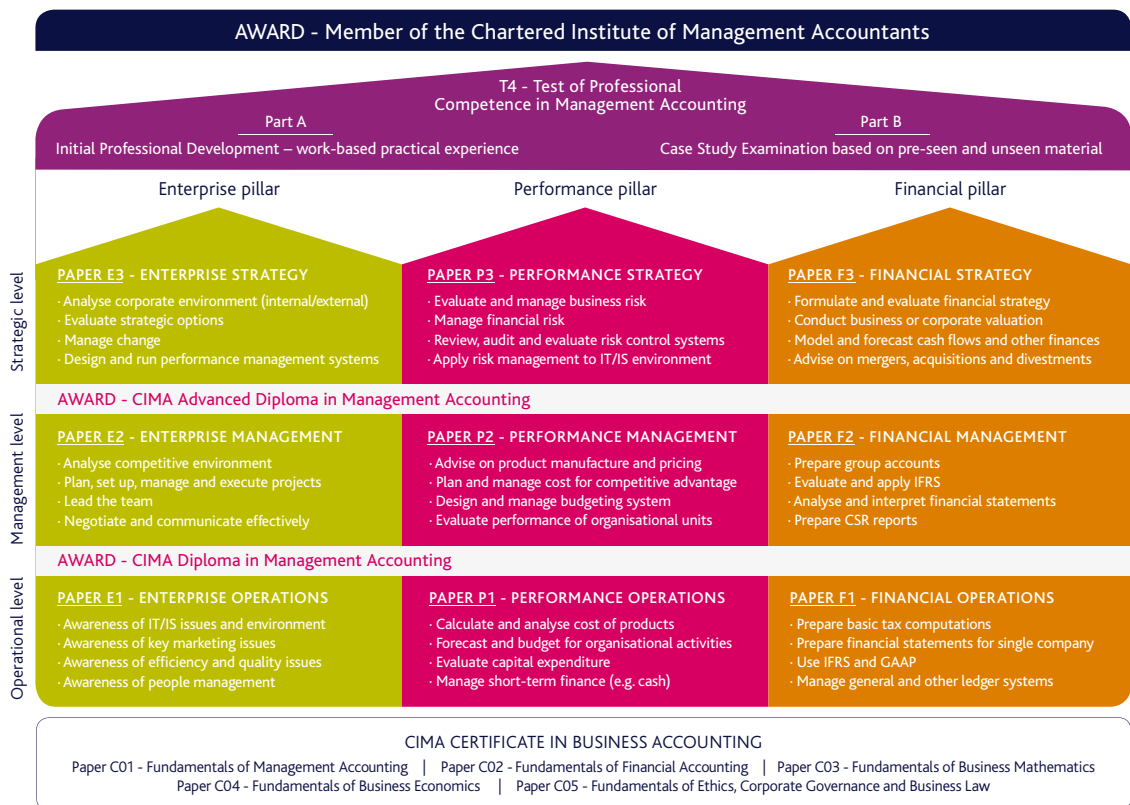
The CIMA Professional Qualification is made up of three learning pillars: enterprise, performance and financial. Each learning pillar is divided into three progressive levels: operational, management and strategic (refer to the diagram below).

Professional examinations are three hours long, with a further 20 minutes reading time at the beginning of the exam. The pass mark is 50%. Currently, all examinations are paper-based, with the T4 part B Case Study Examination also available on PC.

Within each pillar, you are advised to study and pass the operational level papers before undertaking the management level papers. You can choose how many papers you take at each sitting when studying these two levels.

All operational and management level subject examinations must be successfully completed before attempting strategic level papers.

All three strategic level subjects must be studied at the same time, as CIMA requires you to take all three exam papers together at the first sitting of this level.



The fourth and final level (T4) relates to professional competence. To become a CIMA member, students must demonstrate three years of relevant work-based practical experience (T4 part A) and pass the case study (T4 part B).

See our 'Guidance notes by paper' section on page 8 where we direct you to specific resources for each paper.

On completion of all three operational level papers, students are awarded the CIMA Diploma in Management Accounting. The CIMA Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting is awarded when students complete all six operational and management level papers. Certificates are posted within six weeks of the exam results and we will also publish your details on the website providing you have opted in to do so – check your communication preferences in MY CIMA www.cimaglobal.com/mycima

Understanding the syllabus

The syllabus for each paper contains:

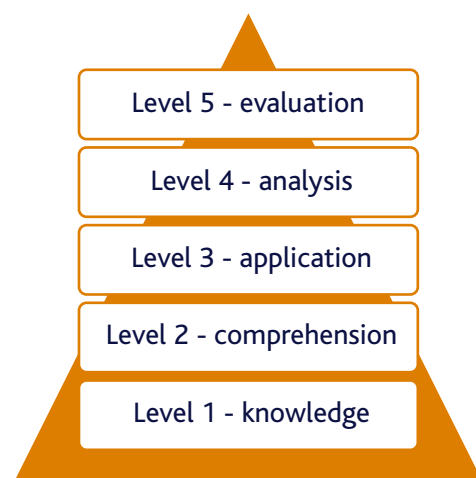
- Lead and component learning outcomes which demonstrate what our students 'can do' once they pass that subject.
- Indicative syllabus content.

A component learning outcome has two main purposes:

- To define the skill or ability (referred to as 'learning objective') that a well-prepared candidate should be able to demonstrate in the examination.
- To demonstrate the approach likely to be taken by examiners in examination questions.

The learning outcomes are part of a hierarchy of learning objectives (Figure 1). 'Knowledge' is level 1 (the lowest level) and the highest level is 'evaluation', which is level 5. The verbs used at the beginning of each learning outcome relate to one of the specific learning objectives.

Figure 1 – Learning objectives (skill or ability that a well-prepared candidate is expected to demonstrate)



Example from E2 (Enterprise Management) syllabus

Component learning outcome – Discuss the value of post-completion audit.

The verb 'discuss' is level 4 (analysis) in the learning objective hierarchy. An examination question based on this component learning outcome could use one of the verbs from level 4 (analysis), level 3 (application), level 2 (comprehension) or from the lowest level 1 (knowledge) but a higher level verb (in this instance, level 5) will not be used to test this component learning outcome.

Study weightings

Within each subject, a percentage weighting is shown against each section topic. This can be used as guidance on the:

- proportion of study time required by each topic
- approximate proportional distribution of marks across section topics.

It's essential you study all the topics within the syllabus, since any single examination question may examine more than one topic.

Study methods

The CIMA qualification can be studied in a variety of ways.

Blended learning

Blended learning offers the effectiveness of face-to-face tuition together with the flexibility of distance learning. An example of this would be a distance learning course followed by a taught revision course.

CIMA Learning

Quality Partner colleges have been assessed by CIMA and provided evidence that they can meet all of our performance requirements. Where possible, we recommend that all students attend a Quality Partner college. Further information regarding the CIMA Learning scheme is available at www.cimaglobal.com/Students/2010-professional-qualification/Study-help-and-tuition/CIMA-learning-what-to-expect

Colleges which are unable to meet the criteria for Quality Partner, but have committed to our delivery guidelines, will be listed on our college list. At this level we have not formally assessed the quality of tuition provided by these colleges, so we strongly advise you to carry out your own research before attending a course.

CIMA Learning does not currently extend to 'online only' course providers.

Home/self-study with official CIMA textbooks

This is the most cost-effective method with which to study the CIMA qualification, the only study costs being your books and exam fees. Home study does require high levels of discipline and self-motivation. The official CIMA textbooks can be purchased from www.cimapublishing.com or for a list of local CIMA publishing booksellers, please contact the Johannesburg office.

Taught course

You can follow a taught course with one of the many colleges globally which teach CIMA. The CIMA Learning college list at www.cimaglobal.com/colleges will show you a list of colleges in your area which provide tuition for the CIMA qualification in varying degrees, whether it is tutor support when studying at home or full taught classes which are either full/part-time, evening/weekend or block basis. Please note, not all providers listed will offer every option. For information on fees, please contact the tuition provider you wish to study with.

Distance learning

If you would like to choose when and where you study, but would also benefit from some tutor support then distance learning may be the option for you. To find CIMA Learning colleges that offer distance learning courses, visit CIMA's college list at www.cimaglobal.com/colleges

Options for distance learning include traditional textbook based, virtual classroom, e-learning or a combination of all three.

The official CIMA online resource is CIMAstudy.com. It is ideal for students in areas where there is little or no tuition provision, or for those who prefer to self-study at their own pace. Courses are now available for operational, management and strategic level subjects. Visit www.CIMAstudy.com for more information and to view demonstration modules.

Study support from CIMA

A wide range of resources are available to download free from www.cimaglobal.com/2010

These include:

- past-exam papers
- model answers
- post-exam guides, written by the examiner
- technical articles, written by examiners, tutors and industry experts
- study videos.

Syllabus

Spend some time analysing the syllabus for each subject you are studying. Each syllabus is divided into a number of broad topics. The learning outcomes in the syllabus identify what you are expected to be able to do in the exam. The verbs used in the beginning of component learning outcomes demonstrate the level at which the examiner can ask a question based on a particular learning outcome.

To help you with your studies, a full copy of the syllabus has been included as part of this welcome pack.

Financial Management

You will regularly receive CIMA's *Financial Management* magazine. This contains an informative mix of features, news and practical advice. Look out for the technical articles and exam notices in the study notes section.

Velocity

Velocity is our global e-magazine for all CIMA students, which is sent out every two months. It contains news, technical articles, case studies, study and career advice and exam notices.

CIMAsphere

CIMAsphere is our online community. It features a range of forums, groups, blogs, videos and live events, providing a platform for students to ask questions, share information, give advice and find expertise and support among peers, CIMA members and alumni.

You can also contact each other through the CIMAsphere web messaging service, organise events and find study buddies. <http://community.cimaglobal.com>

Ethics and professionalism

At CIMA we help you to develop both your technical ability and your professional capacity. Your success is important to us. Once you become a member, the designatory letters (ACMA, CGMA/FCMA, CGMA) and chartered status denote your professionalism, practical experience, credibility and integrity, along with your commitment to ethics and CIMA professional development. Ethics is a key component of being a chartered professional, enhancing both reputation, employability and ongoing earning potential.

In our annual survey, ethics and professional standards are deemed to be 'the most important aspect of CIMA membership'. That is why ethical practice and understanding sits at the heart of the CIMA qualification and all members and students are committed to upholding the CIMA Code of Ethics. The Code is globally recognised and offers a framework and set of principles for all to follow. CIMA's Code and supporting resource material for ethics helps provide useful guidance around ethical practice and resolving ethical dilemmas.

Ultimately, ethics makes good business sense. See why ethics is important to your career and long-term business success www.cimaglobal.com/professional-ethics

Guidance notes by paper

We have produced 'guidance notes' for all the professional qualification papers below. These contain links to all study resources available from CIMA.

Operational level:

E1 enterprise operations (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesE1)

F1 financial operations (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesF1)

P1 performance operations (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesP1)

Management level:

E2 enterprise management (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesE2)

F2 financial management (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesF2)

P2 performance management (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesP2)

Strategic level:

E3 enterprise strategy (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesE3)

F3 financial strategy (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesF3)

P3 performance strategy (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesP3)

T4 level:

T4 parts **A** and **B** (www.cimaglobal.com/guidancenotesT4)

Planning your studies

Follow these tips and be prepared for the CIMA examinations.

- Do some research before choosing how you are going to study – make sure the option you choose will suit you and the way you learn best.
- Read the syllabus for the paper you are studying, then create a study plan and a separate revision plan. Stick to your plans.
- Be realistic when creating your study and revision plans – set achievable targets but make sure that you will have time to cover everything.
- Keep a record of your progress against your plan.
- Be protective of your study time. Find yourself somewhere peaceful to study with no interruptions – if this isn't possible at home, study at work or in the library.
- Put variety into your study sessions – spend some time reading your textbook, do a practice question, or read a related article from the CIMA magazine.
- Build review sessions into your study time to be sure that you fully understand what you are learning.
- Be honest about your strengths and weaknesses – avoid concentrating your studies on the areas that you are good at. Spend time tackling the areas that cause you problems.
- Do plenty of exam question practice and some full mock examinations – this preparation is essential for success in the CIMA examinations.
- Make use of all the study support available from CIMA.
- Studying can be very stressful, particularly around exam time. See our dedicated section for advice from CIMA students, staff and markers on how to keep anxiety at bay. Visit www.cimaglobal.com/studystress

Your first CIMA exam

What to expect

CIMA examinations take place in a wide variety of venues and are held twice a year, in May and November. Examinations last for three hours, with an additional 20 minutes of reading time.

Candidates may use electronic calculators in line with the conditions in the exam rules www.cimaglobal.com/examrules

How to enter

Professional examinations are entered online using your MY CIMA account. Exam entry typically runs from early February to mid-March for May examinations and early August to mid-September for November examinations. Please visit the 'Entry for professional level' page on the CIMA website for further information and dates. Make sure you have read and understood the exam rules and regulations before you book your examinations. For the latest examination fees, please visit www.cimaglobal.com/fees

Exam centres

You can search for your nearest exam centre by town, country, or centre number. Please note you must sit all your exam papers at the same centre for a particular sitting.

Admissions advice

We will email you when your admissions advice is available, usually four to five weeks before the exam. You will need to print it off, ensuring you have details for all papers you are sitting. Bring this information with you to present to the invigilators at your exam centre. Log in to your MY CIMA account and select 'My admission advice' under 'My examinations' then print using the 'Print this page' link.

Attendance slip receipts

You will receive an attendance slip for each exam you sit. The slips are confirmation of your exam attendance and should be kept for at least four months after the examinations as proof of your sitting.

Results

Results for all paper based exams are sent out by first class post or airmail seven weeks after the final exam. To receive your results by email on the same day, log in to your MY CIMA account at least one week before results day, and select 'My personal details' and then 'My communication preferences'.

Be part of CIMA's interactive network

CIMA represents a community of students with a common interest – to enhance their employability by completing the CIMA Professional Qualification and becoming a Chartered Management Accountant.

As a CIMA student, you can now be part of a local community with the ability to exchange views and experiences with other students. More importantly, you can speak to other students about exams or discuss the papers afterwards. Some of the best study advice comes from real CIMA students, so it's worth visiting and participating. Those of you who have completed the CIMA Certificate in Business Accounting may already be aware of some of the following platforms.

CIMA's online community

<http://community.cimaglobal.com>



CIMA Student Support blogs

<http://community.cimaglobal.com/blogs>

CIMA Facebook

www.facebook.com/#!/groups/22174101281/



CIMA Twitter

www.twitter.com/CIMA_News



CIMA LinkedIn

www.linkedin.com/company/cima



Local support

Local support helps you to keep you in touch with changing legal and business requirements in your area. It also puts you in touch with news and events that can help you through the exams and applying for membership.

CIMA Africa

www.cimaglobal.com/Our-locations/Africa

* local specific web pages also exist for Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

CIMA India

www.cimaglobal.com/Our-locations/India1

<http://community.cimaglobal.com/groups/content/cima-india>

CIMA Sri Lanka

www.cimaglobal.com/Our-locations/SriLanka/

<http://community.cimaglobal.com/groups/content/sri-lanka-members-professional-network>

CIMA UK

www.cimaglobal.com/Our-locations/UK

<http://community.cimaglobal.com>

CGMA – the new global designation

Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) is the global designation for management accountants, it's powered by AICPA (the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) and CIMA, two of the world's leading accounting organisations.

On completion of the CIMA qualification and becoming a CIMA member, you are automatically entitled to the CGMA designation. It will add global power to your CV, showcase your value around the world and demonstrate your business acumen, ethics and commitment.

As a CGMA you will benefit from:

- Being part of an online community – a global community of like-minded peers where you can connect with the best minds in management accounting.
- Access to the tools, webinars, reports and research to challenge your thinking and keep you at the forefront of your profession.

To find out more visit www.cgma.org



Questions and answers

Q: What is a contact ID?

A: Your contact ID is your unique CIMA reference number. We give you a contact ID when you register as a CIMA student or create a web account and you can use it in conjunction with a password to access your MY CIMA area and our discussion forums. You will find your contact ID on all correspondence we send you.

Q: I've just completed the CIMA Certificate in Business Accounting qualification. When can I sit my professional level examinations?

A: If you want to sit the professional level examinations, you must have been awarded exemptions from, or have passed, the certificate level papers by 1 March for May professional examinations or 1 September for November examinations. It can take up to 20 working days to award exemptions during January/February and July/August peak periods.

Q: How long will it take me to complete the qualification?

A: There is no time limit to complete the CIMA qualification. On average, it takes a student who is working full-time and studying part-time between three and five years to qualify.

Q: How many times can I sit an examination?

A: There is no limit to the number of attempts you may have at each exam.

Q: Is there a time limit on completing my examinations?

A: No. You can take as long as you want to complete the qualification. However, please note the syllabus is updated on a regular basis (every five years) so you may need to refresh your knowledge when resuming your studies.

Q: Can I study for 2010 syllabus examinations using 2009 books?

A: We always recommend that students use the most up-to-date study material, as a syllabus update is a major change. The 2010 syllabus study material is available for purchase from the CIMA Publishing website or for a list of local CIMA publishing booksellers, please contact the Johannesburg office.

Q: Am I entitled to any exam exemptions for previous study?

A: To find out if you may be eligible for any exemptions from the CIMA examinations, please visit www.cimaglobal.com/exemptions

Q: I hope to receive exemptions, when do I need to pay?

A: If we award you any exemptions you will receive an email confirming this. You can view your exemptions online using your MY CIMA account under 'My exam history'. You are required to pay for your exemptions within eight weeks of them being awarded, either online by credit/debit card or by sending us a cheque or bankers draft.

Q: Do I get a certificate for my exemptions?

A: We do not issue exemption certificates. An email will be sent confirming the exemptions you have been awarded and you can view your exemptions online using your MY CIMA account.

If you choose to waive an exemption and then sit the exam and fail, you cannot reclaim the exemption for this paper.

Q: How do I apply for a UK visa?

A: We are not involved in visa applications. You need to contact the UK Border Agency for further information regarding visas.

Q: I have an MBA or I'm a member of another accountancy body. What exemptions do I get?

A: An accelerated route may be available to MBA holders and members/those who completed the exams of other professional accountancy bodies. Upon completion of a gateway examination, you will receive the CIMA Advanced Diploma in Management Accounting (CIMA Adv Dip MA) and be awarded 11 exemptions from the CIMA examinations (out of a total of 15), allowing you to start studying at strategic level.

Q: Is there anyone I can come and see for advice on joining CIMA?

A: The Johannesburg office is open from 8.30am to 4.30pm CAT. You can call us on +27 (0)11 788 8723 / 0861 CIMASA (0861 246272), email us at johannesburg@cimaglobal.com or visit us at 1st Floor, South West Wing, 198 Oxford Road Illovo 2196.

Q: How do I get a job within management accounting? How easy is it to get a job?

A: You can visit CIMA My Jobs to find out about job offers in your area and sector. This service also allows you to search for a graduate scheme. The careers advice section contains a wealth of information for students and members looking to find a job as a management accountant. You can also use our employer database to find out if your employer or prospective employer is registered with CIMA Training.

Q: How do I get practical experience if I am not working within management accounting?

A: You do not necessarily need to be working within management accounting in order to gain relevant work experience. CIMA students and members have a wide range of jobs available to them, not all of which are within finance or accountancy. Download the practical experience requirements from www.cimaglobal.com/per which will help you to determine whether your current job position allows you to gain the required basic, core and supplementary skills.

Q: Where can I get the Q&As for past examinations?

A: If you are a registered and active CIMA student or tutor, you can access examiners' questions and suggested answers free of charge using your MY CIMA account. Once logged in, select 'Student information' on the right-hand side of your screen, then 'Past exam questions and answers'.

Q: Can I call myself CIMA part-qualified?

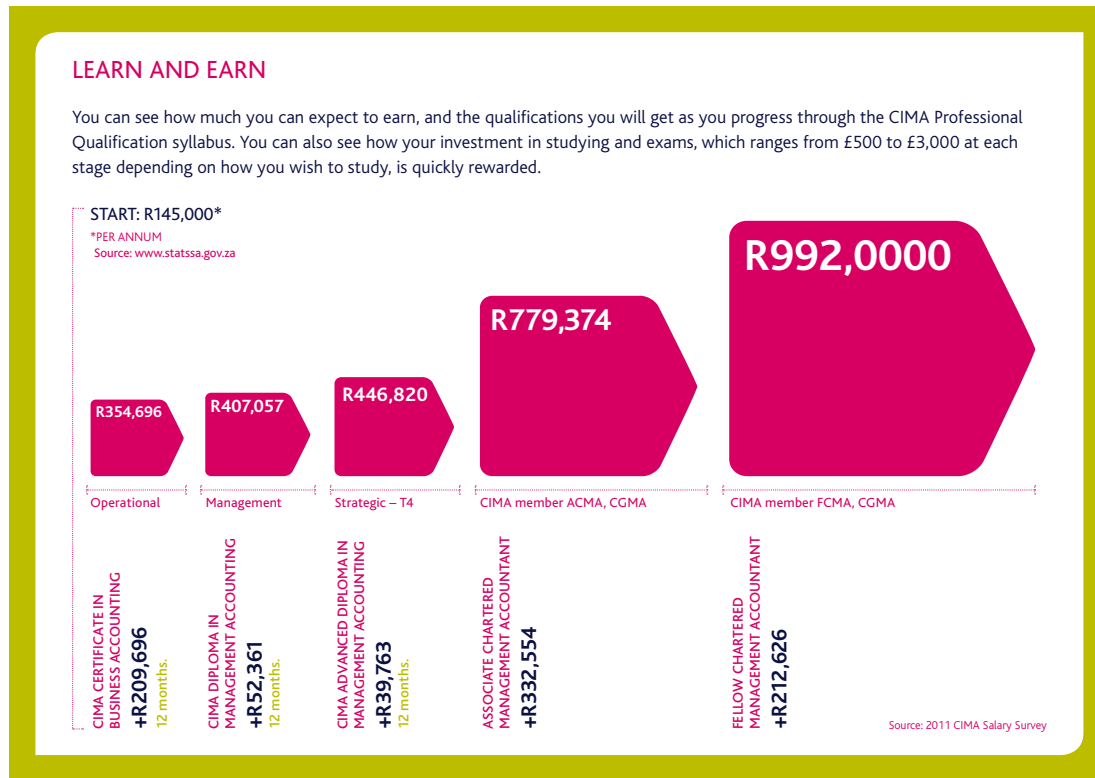
A: No. Full completion of the CIMA qualification, including the practical experience requirement, is broadly equivalent to a Master's degree and has post-graduate status in the UK. Membership (ACMA, CGMA) is awarded when the full qualification, including the final test of professional competence, parts A and B have been successfully completed. CIMA does not use the term 'part-qualified'.

However, your progress through the examinations is rewarded at various stages, with the award of the CIMA Diploma in Management Accounting (CIMA Dip MA) on completion of all three operational level papers and the CIMA Advanced Diploma (CIMA Adv Dip MA) on completion of all six operational and management level papers.

These intermediate awards are a useful way of describing your progress and current skills and knowledge to employers.

Q: How much can I expect to earn once I'm CIMA qualified?

A:



Q: How do I contact CIMA?

A: Our Johannesburg office is open from 8.30am to 4.30pm CAT Monday to Friday.

T. +27 (0)11 788 8723 or 0861 CIMASA (0861 246272)

E. johannesburg@cimaglobal.com

Postal address:

PO Box 745
Northlands 2116

Physical address:

1st Floor, South West Wing
198 Oxford Road
Illovo



**Chartered Institute of
Management Accountants**

1st Floor, 198 Oxford Road
Illovo, Johannesburg, South Africa

Postal address:

PO Box 745, Northlands 2116, South Africa

T. +27 (0)11 788 8723/0861 CIMA SA

F. +27 (0)11 788 8724

E. johannesburg@cimaglobal.com

www.cimaglobal.com/southafrica