CPA EVOLUTION
KEEPING YOU A STEP AHEAD

CPA Evolution: Highlights from the final CPA Exam Blueprint
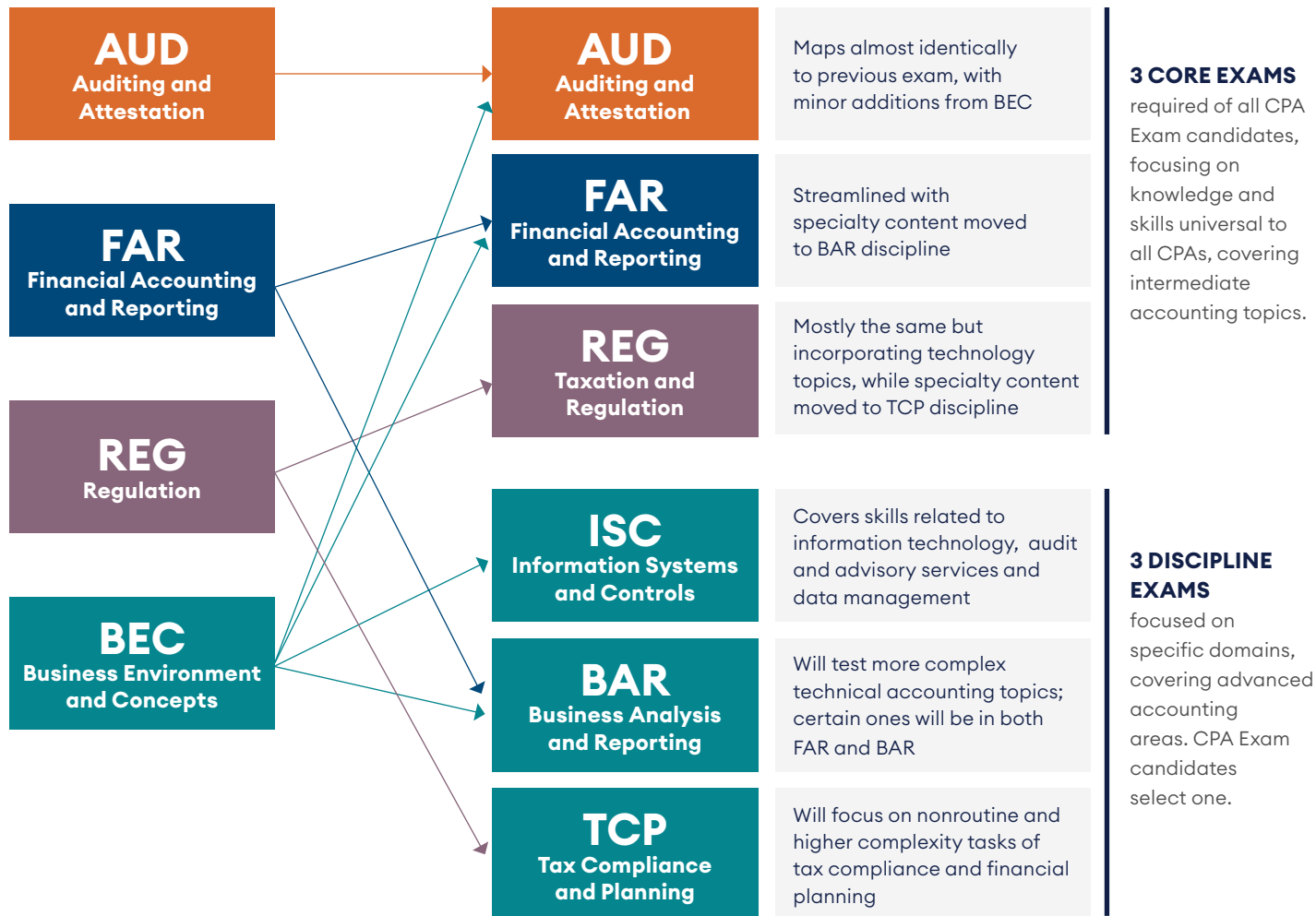
CPA Evolution: Background

The CPA Evolution initiative aims to transform the CPA licensure model to recognize the rapidly changing skills and competencies the practice of accounting requires today and will require in the future. After more than two years of industry analysis and feedback on the CPA Evolution Exposure Draft, the AICPA released the final exam blueprint in January 2023.

Current CPA Exam

Under the current structure, students must pass all four sections of the CPA Exam.

New CPA Exam

The new exam structure includes three required Core exams, and the selection of one of three Discipline sections. The sections can be taken in any order. Technology topics will be covered throughout all sections of the new exam, but candidates should be aware of the **new testing windows** for 2024.

AUD
Auditing and Attestation

FAR
Financial Accounting and Reporting

REG
Regulation

BEC
Business Environment and Concepts

AUD
Auditing and Attestation
— Maps almost identically to previous exam, with minor additions from BEC

FAR
Financial Accounting and Reporting
— Streamlined with specialty content moved to BAR discipline

REG
Taxation and Regulation
— Mostly the same but incorporating technology topics, while specialty content moved to TCP discipline

3 CORE EXAMS required of all CPA Exam candidates, focusing on knowledge and skills universal to all CPAs, covering intermediate accounting topics.

ISC
Information Systems and Controls
— Covers skills related to information technology, audit and advisory services and data management

BAR
Business Analysis and Reporting
— Will test more complex technical accounting topics; certain ones will be in both FAR and BAR

TCP
Tax Compliance and Planning
— Will focus on nonroutine and higher complexity tasks of tax compliance and financial planning

3 DISCIPLINE EXAMS focused on specific domains, covering advanced accounting areas. CPA Exam candidates select one.

New exam structure

All exams are a mix of multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and task-based simulations (TBSs).

+ AUD has 78 MCQs and 7 TBSs.
+ FAR has 50 MCQ's and 7 TBSs.
+ REG has 72 MCQs and 8 TBSs.
+ BAR has 50 MCQ's and 7 TBSs.
+ ISC has 82 MCQs and 6 TBSs.
+ TCP has 68 MCQs and 7 TBSs.

There are two notable changes in the new exam:

+ There are no longer any Written Communications TBS questions.
+ There are no more Authoritative Literature, only excerpts in exhibits on TBS questions.

Skill levels

The skill level categories and descriptions are not changing, but there are minor updates to the skill level allocation for some sections that cover increases or decreases in the percentage of questions for various levels, depending on the section.

SECTION	Remembering and Understanding	Application	Analysis	Evaluation
AUD – Core	30–40%	30–40%	15–25%	5–15%
FAR – Core	5–15%	45–55%	35–45%	–
REG – Core	25–35%	35–45%	25–35%	–
BAR – Discipline	10–20%	45–55%	30–40%	–
ISC – Discipline	55–65%	20–30%	10–20%	–
TCP – Discipline	5–15%	50–60%	30–40%	–

Key dates

• **November 15, 2023 –** NASBA will stop processing BEC exam applications

• **November 22, 2023 –** NASBA will start processing applications for the new discipline exam sections (BAR, TCP, and ISC)

• **December 15, 2023 –** last day for testing in 2023 calendar year for ALL current exam sections (AUD, BEC, FAR, REG)

• **January 10, 2024 –** first day of testing all parts of the new exam using the tentative test administration schedule shared in **this blog post**

Becker.