

# ACC320 Contemporary Accounting Issues

**School:** School of Business and Creative Industries

2025 | Semester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast  
UniSC Moreton Bay

**BLENDED  
LEARNING**

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Online

**ONLINE**

You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

Please go to [usc.edu.au](http://usc.edu.au) for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

In Contemporary Accounting Issues you gain a deeper understanding of accounting in today's complex business world. This will include community consciousness as you recognise the important role accounting plays in the relationship between business, the environment and society. You will be empowered to become a future business leader as you extend your knowledge of contemporary accounting issues, such as regulation and standard setting, sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals, and the efficient operation of capital markets. You will also extend your communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent exposition as you apply established theories to those issues.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – Recorded online delivery of learning material.	1hr	Week 1	12 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – Live and scheduled face to face workshops.	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
<b>ONLINE</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – Recorded online delivery of learning material	1hr	Week 1	12 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – Live, online Workshops (Recorded).	2hrs	Week 1	12 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

- Accounting theory construction
- Standard setting and theories of regulation
- Sustainability and corporate social responsibility
- Measurement in accounting
- Fair value accounting
- Theories in accounting
- Earnings management
- Products of the accounting system
- Capital market research and accounting
- Behavioural accounting research

## 2. What level is this course?

300 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

## 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

## 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
1 Apply theoretical frameworks to a contemporary accounting issue.	Empowered	PC3, PC3.1, PC4, PC4.1
2 Demonstrate advanced written communication skills in a business context.	Empowered	PC1, PC1.1
3 Explain and interpret contemporary commerce-related knowledge and theory.	Knowledgeable	PC3, PC3.1
4 Describe economic, social and environmental sustainability issues concerning commerce-related practices, and make connections to the SDG's.	Sustainability-focussed	PC3, PC3.1, PC4, PC4.1

\* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
ASSOCIATION TO ADVANCE COLLEGIATE SCHOOLS OF BUSINESS	
PC1	Communication
PC1.1	Written Communication
PC3	Creative and Critical Thinking
PC3.1	Problem Solving
PC4	Community Consciousness
PC4.1	Social Responsibility and Sustainability

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

### 5.1. Pre-requisites

ACC210

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

You will have a general knowledge of accounting principles and practice.

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Formative feedback will be provided through weekly workshop discussions. Workshops are designed to scaffold skills required for the course assessment. Within workshops, feedback on progress towards achieving the learning outcomes will be provided. In addition, online feedback to student responses will be provided on the Canvas Discussion page.

### 6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Written Piece	Individual	20%	800 words	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Literature Review (or component)	Individual	30%	1,500 words	Week 9	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	50%	2 hours	Exam Period	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

**All - Assessment Task 1:** Research proposal outline

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your ability to develop a research question and proposal outline based on concepts covered in the course.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Written Piece		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	This is an individual written assessment task. In this task you will develop an outline of a research proposal on a contemporary accounting issue. This task will assess the role of accounting in achieving a more sustainable future and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	The demonstration of your ability to connect theoretical constructs to a contemporary sustainability issue in accounting.	1 2 3 4
	2	Development of a clear research question with demonstrated link to sustainability	3 4
	3	Advanced use of written communication skills to articulate your message	2
	4	Careful attention to the template format and requirements including referencing.	2
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Problem solving, Applying technologies		

**All - Assessment Task 2:** Research Proposal

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your ability to apply theoretical frameworks to a contemporary sustainability accounting issue.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Literature Review (or component)		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	This is an individual assessment. You will apply a theoretical framework to a contemporary accounting issue linked to the Sustainability Development Goals. This task is being used for measuring assurance of learning towards Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation. The following Program Competency will be assessed: PC1.1 - Demonstrate effective written communication skills in a business context.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Identification of a clear accounting issue and hypothesis	1 3
	2	Organisation and structure of written content	2
	3	Capacity to develop and articulate informed arguments	1 2 3
	4	Referencing of sources of information used within the body of the document and in a reference list, using Harvard referencing style	2
	5	Accuracy and presentation of written work including English expression, discipline-based vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation	2
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation		

### All - Assessment Task 3: Final examination

<b>GOAL:</b>	To demonstrate your understanding of the role of accounting theory, generally, and to apply specific theory to accounting issues		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Examination - Centrally Scheduled		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	This is an individual assessment. It will comprise of short and long-answer questions that may be drawn from any of the course modules. This task is an invigilated exam that you will take place at a specific time and date scheduled by the University. Further details will be provided on Canvas.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	The accuracy of your interpretation and application of accounting theory	1 2 3 4
	2	Demonstration of an ability to interpret and think critically in relation to contemporary accounting issues.	3
	3	Advanced use of written communication skills to articulate your argument	2
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation		

## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Rankin et al	2023	Contemporary Issues in Accounting	3rd edn	Wiley
Required	Michaela Rankin, Kimberly Ferlauto, Susan McGowan, Patricia Stanton	2023	Contemporary Issues in Accounting, 3rd Edition	3	Wiley

### 8.2. Specific requirements

Access to a computer with an internet connection, either on-campus or at home.

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

## 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

### Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

## 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

Less than 15 minutes: No penalty

From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty

More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

## 10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email [safe@usc.edu.au](mailto:safe@usc.edu.au).

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au).

## 10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au).

## 10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 1226.

## 10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [AccessAbility@usc.edu.au](mailto:AccessAbility@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 2890.

## 10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

## 10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

## 10.10. General Enquiries

### In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890

**Email:** [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)