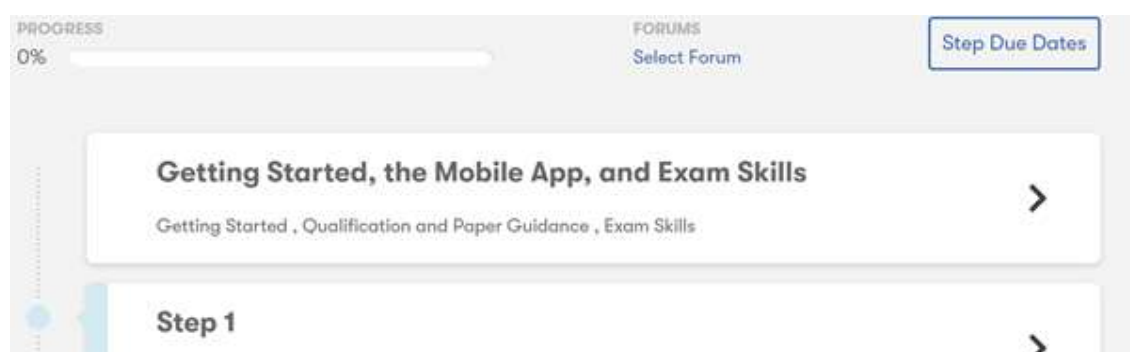


ACCA SBL

Online Classroom Study Guidance

Getting started

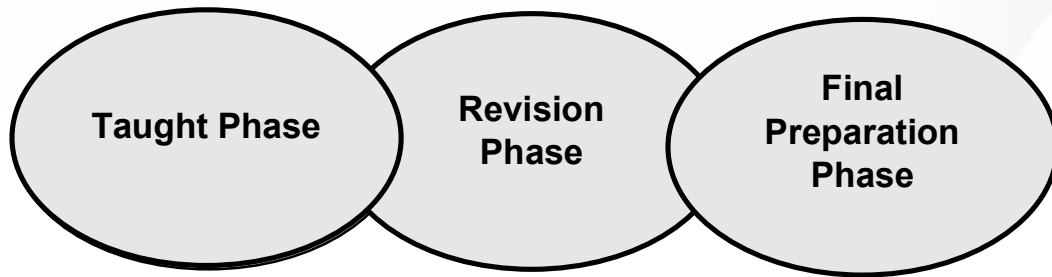
Welcome to your Online Classroom (OCR) taught phase course. If you are new to studying online, before you begin you may find it useful to access the 'Getting Started' guidance above step 1 in the Hub:



Forums

If you have a question at any point, you can post this to the online classroom forum for this paper, where a tutor will respond.

To access the forums, click the button just above the 'Getting Started' section, as shown in the screenshot above. Even if you don't have a question to ask, it is worth accessing the forum to review the questions asked by other students, as you may find the tutor responses helpful to you.



Taught Phase

The emphasis of this first stage is studying the syllabus and gaining the knowledge required to attempt exam questions. During this stage you will work through each chapter of the Strategic Business Leader Workbook and steps 1-6 of the Achievement Ladder.

Revision Phase

During this stage the emphasis is on practising exam-standard questions to learn how to apply your knowledge and develop your exam. During this phase you will attempt Step 7 of the Achievement Ladder.

Final Preparation Phase

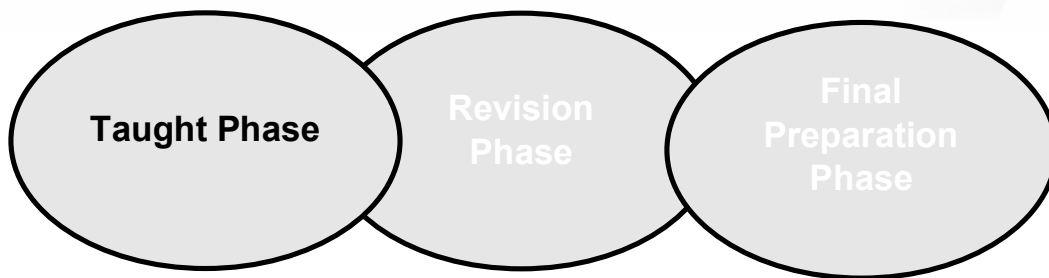
The aim here is to bring all of your skills and knowledge together in a final mock exam: Step 8 of the Achievement Ladder.

The Hub contains all the information, documents and videos for your course. The different phases of your course are clearly identified in different steps so you can easily find them.

Before you begin the Taught Phase, please take some time looking at the information provided in the **Introduction** section, in particular:

- Watch the Introduction to Strategic Business Leader and How to study and pass video.
- Review the ACCA Support Resources and the ACCA Practice Experience Requirement (PER) Support

Taught Phase



This guidance will take you through the Taught Phase of your course. The emphasis of the Taught Phase is on gaining the knowledge and beginning to develop the skills in order to attempt exam questions. During this Phase you will work through the SBL Workbook, using the online lectures to guide you. You will also work through Steps 1-6 of the Achievement Ladder. The Taught Phase is divided into 6 Achievement Ladder Steps, when you have covered all the chapters in that step, you should attempt the relevant Achievement Ladder Step.

Step 1

This guidance gives a total of approximately **20 hours of study*** for step 1 of the course.

**The timings given are approximate and include time to stop and review online lectures and to check your answers for any question practice. You may find that some study sessions take you more or less time than given here. Remember there is no such thing as a 'typical' student so these approximations are for guidance only.*

Introduction	Approx. 1 hour
This topic area provides some useful advice on the ACCA Professional Skills which you will encounter in your Strategic Business Leader exam, as well as providing some useful insight into the Exam Success Skills that you will need to master.	1 hour
Key areas Introduction to skills - read through this section in your Workbook to understand the nature of the SBL exam.	50 minutes
Further reading, technical articles and question practice Topic introduction- effective leadership. This focuses on the real life case study of Mark and Mo Constantine, the founders of hair and beauty company, Lush. The case study illustrates the important role that ethical leadership and culture play in organisations and governance.	10 minutes

Chapter 1– Effective Leadership: Strategy, leadership and culture	Approx. 1.5 hours
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the fundamental nature of strategy • Role of effective leadership • Organisational culture <p>This is an important chapter which introduces the vital role that leadership plays in determining an organisation's strategy. Consideration is also given to the important role that organisational culture plays in organisations.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online and the workbook and attempt the four Activities. This is your first opportunity to attempt Activities which test the ACCA Professional Skill of Analysis.</p> <p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	1.5 hours

Chapter 2 – Effective Leadership: Stakeholders and social responsibility	Approx. 2 hours
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal-agent relationship in corporate governance • Stakeholders (in particular stakeholder power and interest) • Social responsibility and corporate citizenship • Integrated reporting <p>Issues relating to corporate governance, stakeholder power and interest, and social responsibility are the focus of this chapter. You should aim to reinforce your learning by attempting the Activity 2 which focuses on stakeholders. Activity 3 provides you with an opportunity to apply your knowledge of Mendelow's matrix to a longer, scenario style question. Activities 4 and 5 focus on the important topic of corporate social responsibility. When attempting Activity 4 it is important that you pay careful attention to the ACCA Professional Skill, which in this case is testing your communication skills as you are asked to prepare one presentation slide and accompanying notes.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p> <p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	1.5 hours 0.5 hours

Chapter 3 - Effective Leadership: Impact of corporate governance on strategy	Approx. 1.5 hours
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental concepts in corporate governance • Rules versus principles-based approach to governance • Corporate governance in different parts of the world • Ownership and corporate governance arrangements <p>This chapter focuses on corporate governance and its interaction with strategy. Corporate governance is an important area in the Strategic Business Leader syllabus, as such this chapter covers a number of key themes which you need to be aware of. Understanding the different roles played by the executive and non-executive directors and the various types of committees which exist are important. It is important not to overlook the important role that governance plays in public sector organisations as well. There are five Activities in this chapter. You are strongly advised to take the time to attempt these.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p> <p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	<p>1 hours</p> <p>0.5 hours</p>

Skills Checkpoint 1 – Commercial acumen	Approx. 30 minutes
<p>At this point you should have covered the content in chapters 1 to 3 of the Strategic Business Leader workbook relating to key concepts in Effective Leadership. Skills checkpoint 1 provides a step by step approach to attempting a question which tests the ACCA Professional Skill of commercial acumen. The skills checkpoint focuses on the exam success skills which you will need to master to be successful in your exam.</p>	

Achievement Ladder Step 1	Approx. 40 minutes
<p>Now you are ready to take your first step towards exam success!</p> <p>Achievement Ladder Step 1 is an opportunity to consolidate your knowledge and see how far you have come. You are then able to concentrate on any weaknesses before moving onto the next part of your studies.</p> <p>This Step online test, based on topics covered so far, is auto-marked. Make sure you work through the feedback very carefully, covering the questions you answered correctly as well as those you didn't. You will both reinforce and extend your understanding of the syllabus content if you do this.</p> <p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 1: 20 minutes, reviewing feedback carefully: 20 minutes</p>	

Step 2

This guidance gives a total of approximately **7.5 hours of study**.

Topic Introduction – Optimising Strategic Decisions	Approx. 10 minutes
<p>The Introduction to Stage 2: Optimising Strategic Business Decisions focuses on the real life case of US video rental company, Blockbuster, which despite having been very successful for a number of years ultimately failed. As this case illustrates failure to consider changes in the external environment can cause even the most successful companies to struggle. The focus of the next three chapters is upon understanding the importance of the external environment, as well as the internal resources, capabilities and competences that organisations need to be successful.</p>	

Chapter 4 - Optimising Strategic Decisions: The external environment	Approx. 1.5 hours
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The macro-environment of an organisation, including PESTEL • The concept of strategic drift • Porter's Diamond • Porter's five forces framework • Scenario planning <p>Some of the themes covered in this chapter were covered in ACCA Accountant in Business. If you were exempt from Accountant in Business or sat this exam a long time ago, you may like to refresh your memory by listening to 'The Business Environment' Online Lecture in the Assumed Knowledge section before listening to the Strategic Business Leader Online Lecture for Chapter 4. The focus of Chapter 4 covers the important topic of the external environment. In the Strategic Business Leader exam when asked to analyse the external environment of the organisation featured in the question you may, on occasions, need to make a judgement call whether or not to use an appropriate model or theory when structuring your answer. This chapter contains three important models which you may find helpful when structuring your answer: PESTEL analysis, Porter's Diamond, and Porter's five forces framework. It is important to note that you are advised to only use models which you judge as being relevant in answering a particular task. Activity 1 tests the ACCA Professional Skill of analysis in the context of the environmental factors affecting an apple farm. Activity 4 tests the ACCA Professional Skill of commercial acumen. You are strongly advised to take the time to attempt all of the activities.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	1 hours
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	0.5 hours

Chapter 5 - Optimising Strategic Decisions: Strategic capability	Approx. 1 hour
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different types of resources and competences • The concept of sustainable competitive advantage • Porter's value chain • SWOT analysis <p>Chapter 5 is focused on the concept of strategic capability. Understanding the important role that resources and competences play in the creation of strategic capability is very important. Porter's value chain provides a useful framework for assessing the activities of an organisation. As such you are advised to learn the key components of the model as this may assist you when structuring your answer to exam questions. You should aim to attempt Activity 2 and 3 as these both focus on analysis in the context of two very different types of organisation, in addition to testing two of the five ACCA Professional Skills. Another important model which you need to be familiar with is SWOT analysis. SWOT brings together internal and external analyse. Activity 4 provides an opportunity to apply your understanding of strengths and weaknesses to a fashion company.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	40 minutes
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	20 minutes

<p>Chapter 6 - Optimising Strategic Decisions: Competitive advantage and strategic choice</p>	<p>Approx. 1.5 hours</p>
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities and problems of pursuing different strategies • Seven P's • Price-based differentiation and lock-in • Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and public sector matrix portfolio models • Ansoff's matrix • Methods of development including business combinations and partnering • Suitability, feasibility and acceptability (SFA) of strategic options <p>Chapter 6 covers a number of key topics. As such you are advised to study the material covered here thoroughly. Having considered internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats in the last two chapters, chapter 6 moves on to discuss the strategic choices available to organisations. The aim for organisations is to make the right strategic choices to enable them to create a sustainable competitive advantage. The BCG matrix, Ansoff's matrix, methods of development, and the SFA's are key areas. Activity 2 provides an opportunity to apply your understanding of the BCG matrix to a longer form question. The activity tests the ACCA Professional Skill of commercial acumen in the context of analysing three companies. You should take the time to attempt this activity fully. Activity 3 focuses on a proposal to develop the business of a cloth and clothes manufacturer. This activity tests the ACCA Professional Skill of evaluation.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	<p>60 minutes</p>
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>

<p>Skills Checkpoint 2 – Analysis</p>	<p>Approx. 30 minutes</p>
<p>At this point you should have covered the content in chapters 4 to 6 of the Strategic Business Leader workbook relating to key concepts in Optimising Strategic Decisions. Skills checkpoint 2 provides a step by step approach to attempting a question which tests the ACCA Professional Skill of analysis. The skills checkpoint focuses on the exam success skills which you will need to master to be successful in your exam.</p>	

Achievement Ladder Step 2

Approx.
1 hour 20
minutes

Now you have covered Taught Phase – Part 2, you are ready to take your next step towards exam success.

Achievement Ladder Step 2 comprises two mini case study section B questions.

Achievement Ladder Step 2 is a 25 mark question which covers key topics based on Chapters 4-6. The two requirements test two of the ACCA Professional Skills. Once you have attempted the question, you should work through the suggested solutions, paying particular attention to the professional skills marking schemes. This will help you to identify the differences between producing a very good answer and a not so good answer.

Estimated timings: attempting Step 2: 60 minutes, reviewing feedback carefully: 20 minutes

Step 3

This guidance gives a total of approximately **6.5 hours of study**.

Topic Introduction – Assessing and Managing Risk and Ethical Issues	Approx. 10 minutes
The Introduction to Stage 3: Assessing and Managing Risk and Ethical Issues focuses on the real life case study involving Michael Woodford during his time at Japanese firm, Olympus. The case study illustrates the perils that organisations face when internal controls and ethical standards fail.	

Chapter 7 – Assessing and Managing Risk and Ethical Issues – Assessing and managing risk	Approx. 1 hour 15 minutes
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The concept of risk management• Risk appetite• TARA framework <p>The focus of this chapter is upon the important area of assessing and managing risk. A question in the Strategic Business Leader exam may require you to assess the risks that the featured organisation faces, and may require you to propose appropriate ways of managing these risks. This chapter includes eight activities for you to attempt, each of which covers key themes relating to risk management. As such you are strongly advised to attempt these as they cover four of the five ACCA Professional Skills.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	55 minutes
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	20 minutes

Chapter 8 – Assessing and Managing Risk and Ethical Issues – Internal control systems	Approx. 1 hour 10 minutes
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key components of effective internal control systems • The internal audit function <p>This chapter builds upon chapter 7. This chapter focuses on the key components of internal control systems. Consideration is given to the role that the internal audit function and audit committees play in maintaining effective internal controls. Activity 2 tests the ACCA Professional Skill of scepticism, and provides a great opportunity for you to display your knowledge of internal controls in a practical context while challenging the information provided. Activities 3 and 4 test the skills of evaluation and communication. You are advised to attempt both of these.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p> <p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter</p>	<p>50 minutes</p> <p>20 minutes</p>

Chapter 9– Assessing and Managing Risk and Ethical Issues – Applying ethical principles	Approx. 1 hour
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of ethics relevant to accounting professionals • Ethical threats and safeguards • Combating fraud, bribery and corruption <p>Ethics is a core part of the Strategic Business Leader syllabus, as such gaining an understanding of the key themes in chapter 9 is particularly important. It is possible that a question requirement in the Strategic Business Leader exam could ask you to identify the ethical threats facing the featured organisation, and to then propose a course of action to address the threats identified. Therefore making sure you are familiar with the typical safeguards that organisations can implement is particularly important. Activities 2 and 3 test the ACCA Professional Skill of scepticism. You should attempt each of these.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p> <p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	<p>40 minutes</p> <p>20 minutes</p>

Skills Checkpoint 3 – Scepticism	Approx. 30 minutes
<p>At this point you should have covered the content in chapters 7 to 9 of the Strategic Business Leader workbook relating to key concepts in Assessing and Managing Risk and Ethical Issues. Skills checkpoint 3 provides a step by step approach to attempting a question which tests the ACCA Professional Skill of scepticism. The skills checkpoint focuses on the exam success skills which you will need to master to be successful in your exam.</p>	

Achievement Ladder Step 3	Approx. 1 hour 20 minutes
<p>Now you have covered Taught Phase – Part 3, you are ready to take your next step towards exam success.</p> <p>Achievement Ladder Step 3 is a 20 question Practice test, based on chapters 1-6. This Step is auto-marked. Make sure you work through the feedback very carefully, covering the questions you answered correctly as well as those you didn't. You will both reinforce and extend your understanding of the syllabus content if you do this.</p> <p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 3: 40 minutes, reviewing feedback carefully: 40 minutes</p>	

Step 4

This guidance gives a total of approximately **5 hours of study**.

Topic Introduction – Evaluating and Enabling Strategic Change	Approx. 10 minutes
The introduction to Stage 4: Evaluating and Enabling Strategic Change focuses on the rapid rise and growth of Chinese firm, Alibaba. As the case study illustrates a large part of Alibaba's success has been due to its ability to use technology to exploit opportunities and to generate strong financial returns. Financial analysis, the applications of IT, and e-business form the basis of the next three chapters.	

Chapter 10 – Evaluating and Enabling Strategic Change: Financial analysis	Approx. 2 hours
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The relationship between financial objectives and business strategy• Impact of technology on the finance function and finance professional• Business partnering, outsourcing, shared or global business services• Management accounting techniques (including budgeting, forecasting)• Organisational performance (KPIs) <p>A number of the themes covered in this chapter should be familiar to you from your earlier ACCA studies. Questions in the Strategic Business Leader exam may require you to assess a proposed strategy or project, or even carry out an appraisal of the featured organisations performance using ratios or financial and non-financial performance indicators. Therefore being comfortable with conducting performance evaluations will be of vital importance. There are four activities in this chapter to attempt, testing three of the five ACCA Professional Skills. Ensure that you take the time to go through these carefully.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	1 hour 20 minutes
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	40 minutes

Chapter 11 – Evaluating and Enabling Strategic Change: Applications of IT	Approx. 1 hour 10 minutes
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud and mobile technologies (benefits and risks) • Big data • Cyber security <p>The increasing use of technology and IT in business makes this a particularly important chapter. Understanding commonly used technologies such as cloud and mobile computing is important. Some of the content in this chapter may be familiar to you as a number of the key themes covered here have been highly publicised over the past few years in the business press. Robotics and Artificial Intelligence are changing the way businesses work but lead to ethical considerations as can be seen in Activity 1. The concept of big data has become increasingly important in recent times, as such you are strongly advised to attempt Activity 2 which focuses on the use of big data in relation to strategic development at the featured organisation.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	50 minutes
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	20 minutes

Chapter 12 – Evaluating and Enabling Strategic Change: E-business	Approx. 1 hour 10 minutes
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models for delivering e-business • e-Marketing: 6 Is • Disruptive innovation and technologies including FinTech • Blockchain and cryptocurrencies <p>This chapter builds upon the previous chapter and explores the role that e-business has had on organisations. In the Strategic Business Leader exam it is important that you have a good understanding of the ways in which internet-based technologies have impacted on organisations and industries. As we mentioned previously, ultimately you will need to determine whether the use of a particular theoretical model in structuring your answer is appropriate in light of the information presented in the question scenario. Ensuring you are comfortable with the 6 I's model of e-marketing is one of the most important theories in this chapter. Activity 2 which tests the ACCA Professional Skill of commercial acumen provides an opportunity to apply your understanding of the 6 I's model. Activity 3 provides you with an opportunity to attempt providing advice as you are asked to discuss how the featured organisation could develop its website in response to a recent survey. Make sure you take the time to attempt this fully.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p> <p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	<p>50 minutes</p> <p>20 minutes</p>

Skills Checkpoint 4 – Evaluation	Approx. 30 minutes
<p>At this point you should have covered the content in chapters 10 to 12 of the Strategic Business Leader workbook relating to key concepts in Evaluating and enabling strategic change. Skills checkpoint 4 provides a step by step approach to attempting a question which tests the ACCA Professional Skill of evaluation. The skills checkpoint focuses on the exam success skills which you will need to master to be successful in your exam.</p>	

Achievement Ladder Step 4	Approx. 2.5 hours
<p>Now you have covered Taught Phase – Part 4, you are ready to take your next step towards exam success!</p> <p>Achievement Ladder Step 4 is an opportunity to consolidate your knowledge and see how far you have come. You are then able to concentrate on any weaknesses before moving onto the next part of your studies.</p> <p>Step 4 is two written questions, worth a combined total of 50 marks. These questions cover key topics from chapters 1-9. This Step is submitted for marking by BPP. You should tackle the questions to time. The two questions between them test all of the ACCA Professional Skills. Once you have attempted the questions, you should work through the suggested solutions, paying particular attention to the professional skills marking schemes. These will help you to identify the differences between producing a very good answer and a not so good answer. When attempting the full Strategic Business Leader exam you will have 240 minutes to attempt all of the requirements. ACCA advise spending 40 minutes of this time reading and planning your answers, and to then spend the remaining 200 minutes finishing your plans and writing up your answer. As Achievement Ladder Step 4 is worth 50 marks you should look to spend 20 minutes reading and planning your answer and the remaining 100 minutes writing up your answer.</p> <p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 4: 120 minutes, reviewing feedback carefully: 40 minutes</p>	

Step 5

This guidance gives a total of approximately **11 hours of study**.

Topic Introduction – Implementing Strategic Change	Approx. 10 minutes
The Introduction to Stage 5: Implementing Strategic Change focuses on the changes that have been implemented at technology firm, IBM. The case study illustrates the need for all organisations to adapt to changing conditions. The content covered in the final three chapters of the Strategic Business Leader workbook neatly brings together the related themes of change management, process redesign and project management.	

Chapter 13 – Implementing Strategic Change: Enabling success and strategic change	Approx. 2 hours
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reorganising organisational structures and internal relationships to deliver strategies• Collaborative working• Talent management• POPIT (four view model)• Baldrige model• Balogun and Hope-Hailey contextual features• Lewin's three-stage model <p>Online Lectures</p> <p>The focus of this chapter is on the practical issues that organisations face when implementing a given strategy. Understanding the implications that a new strategy will have on an organisation's structure and ways of working is vitally important as this could potentially form the basis for an exam question. You need to ensure that you are comfortable with the different approaches of collaborative working which have emerged in recent times. Activity 1 tests the ACCA Professional Skill of communication and focuses on outsourcing. Activity 2 provides an opportunity to attempt a question which requires you to apply your knowledge of talent management. Balogun and Hope-Hailey's contextual features model, the POPIT (four view) model and Lewin's three stage model provide useful insights into different aspects of change management.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	1.5 hours
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	30 minutes

Chapter 14 – Implementing Strategic Change: Process redesign

Approx.
1 hour 20
minutes

Key areas

- Harmon's process-strategy matrix
- Process redesign options and methodology

Online Lectures

In this chapter we explore the topic of process redesign. A key model that you need to learn from this chapter is Harmon's process-strategy matrix, again this a model which you could look to use when structuring your answer in response to a process redesign requirement if deemed appropriate. Activity 1 tests the ACCA Professional Skill of commercial acumen in the context of three potential process initiatives at a bank. This represents a great opportunity to apply your knowledge of Harmon's matrix to the scenario detail. Make sure that you are comfortable with the different process redesign options as these provide an insight into different methods of improving existing processes. Activities 2 and 4 test commercial acumen and evaluation skills respectively, and provide an opportunity to apply your understanding of the different approaches to process redesign in a practical context. You are strongly advised to attempt both activities.

Online lecture

Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.

1 hour

Further reading, technical articles and question practice

Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.

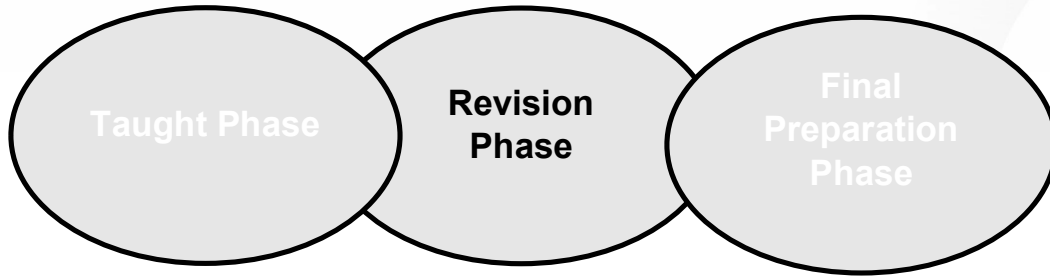
20 minutes

Chapter 15 – Implementing Strategic Change: Project management	Approx. 1 hour 40 minutes
<p>Key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features of project management, including the triple constraint • Role and responsibility of the project manager and project sponsor • Responses to project risk, issues and slippage • Post-implementation and post-project review <p>Online Lectures</p> <p>In this final chapter we explore the important role that project management plays in implementing organisational strategy. Ensure that you are happy with the key themes set out above as question requirements in the Strategic Business Leader exam could easily relate to these areas. One of these areas is covered in Activity 1, which explores the triple constraint of project work in relation to a specific project. Activity 4 focuses on the principles of effective risk management in relation to the specified project. You are strongly advised to attempt all of the activities provided.</p>	
<p>Online lecture</p> <p>Work through the online lecture and the relevant sections of the Workbook.</p>	1 hour 10 minutes
<p>Further reading, technical articles and question practice</p> <p>Attempt further 'essential reading' as specified within the chapter and read any recommended ACCA articles (if any) as specified at the end of the chapter.</p>	30 minutes
Skills Checkpoint 5 – Communication	Approx. 30 minutes
<p>At this point you should have covered the content in chapters 13 to 15 of the Strategic Business Leader workbook relating to key concepts in Implementing Strategic Change. Skills checkpoint 5 provides a step by step approach to attempting a question which tests the ACCA Professional Skill of communication. The skills checkpoint focuses on the exam success skills which you will need to master to be successful in your exam.</p>	

Achievement Ladder Step 5	Approx. 2 hours
<p>Now you have covered Taught Phase – Part 5, you are ready to take your next step towards exam success.</p> <p>Achievement Ladder Step 5 is 30 question Practice Test, based on chapters 1-15. This Step is auto-marked. Make sure you work through the feedback very carefully, covering the questions you answered correctly as well as those you didn't. You will both reinforce and extend your understanding of the syllabus content if you do this.</p> <p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 5: 60 minutes, reviewing feedback carefully: 60 minutes</p>	

Achievement Ladder Step 6	Approx. 4 hours
<p>Now you have covered Taught Phase – Part 5, you are ready to take your next step towards exam success.</p> <p>Achievement Ladder Step 6 consists of three written questions, worth a total of 80 marks, covering topics from across the 15 chapters. This Step is submitted for marking by BPP. You should tackle the questions to time. The three questions between them test all of the ACCA Professional Skills. When attempting the full Strategic Business Leader exam you will have 240 minutes to attempt all of the requirements. ACCA advice spending 40 minutes of this time reading and planning your answers, and to then spend the remaining 200 minutes finishing your plans and writing up your answer. As Achievement Ladder Step 6 is worth 80 marks you should look to spend approximately 30 minutes reading and planning your answer and the remaining 160 minutes writing up your answer. Once you have attempted the questions, you should work through the suggested solutions, paying particular attention to the professional skills marking schemes. These will help you to identify the differences between producing a very good answer and a not so good answer. You will also reinforce and extend your understanding of the syllabus content if you do this. When you receive your feedback you should review it carefully and note what you did well (do more of this!) and which areas you need to improve on in your ongoing studies.</p> <p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 5: 190 minutes, reviewing feedback carefully: 50 minutes</p>	

Revision Phase



This phase is all about taking the knowledge you gained in the taught phase and applying it to exam-standard questions. The emphasis here is very much on exam technique.

Exam technique

Each Skills Checkpoint in the Workbook covers the Specific SBL Skills and Exam Success Skills you need to pass. Working through the Skills Checkpoints using the online lectures for each Checkpoint will help you to develop your exam technique.

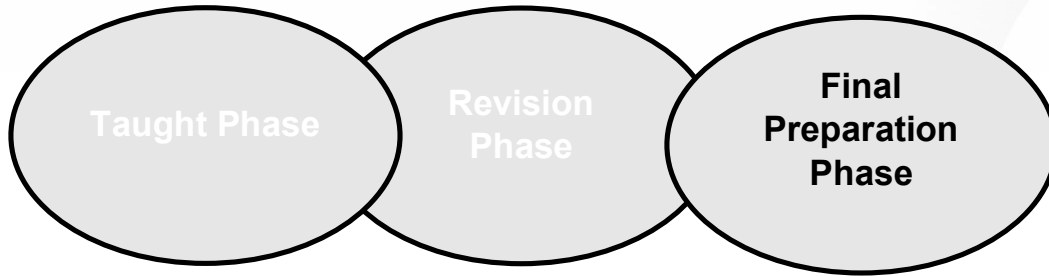
Question practice

The most effective way of improving exam technique is through question practice. Before moving on to the Revision Phase, we recommend you start by ensuring you have attempted Steps 1 to 6 of the Achievement Ladder as well as the questions recommended above from the Workbook Further Question Practice Bank.

Once you have done that, you should attempt **Achievement Ladder Step 7**. There are also revision summaries which contain a short knowledge summary of each chapter in the Workbook if you want a quick reminder of the key points.

Achievement Ladder Step 7	Approx. 5.5 hours
<p>Step 7 is mock exam containing 4 questions worth 100 marks in total. This step will give you a feel for the balance of question types and syllabus coverage you can expect in your real SBL exam.</p> <p>You should ensure that you set aside 4 hours, in a quiet space, where you will not be interrupted. Aim to complete the exam without using any of your notes, so that it is a real test of how prepared you are.</p> <p>As we have mentioned before, when attempting the full Strategic Business Leader exam you will have 240 minutes to attempt all of the requirements. ACCA advice spending 40 minutes of this time reading and planning your answers, and to then spend the remaining 200 minutes finishing your plans and writing up your answer. You should look to use this as a guide. To help break your timings down further, ACCA advise that the 200 minutes should be split across the 80 technical marks on offer in exam, and not the full 100 marks. The rationale for this is that you can earn the 20 professional skills marks by virtue of attempting the technical marks. Therefore you should look at spending 2.5 minutes per mark in the exam on the technical mark requirements, i.e. 200 minutes after planning and reading divided by the 80 technical marks.</p> <p>Once you have finished the exam you should carry out a self-review of your answers. There is a full online debrief, prepared to assist you with both the approach and the technical content.</p> <p>Self-review questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you finish the exam? If not, why not? • Did you allocate your time appropriately? • Did you apply your answer to the scenario? • Think about what you'd do differently if you sat the paper again. 	
<p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 7: 4 hours, reviewing feedback carefully :1.5 hours</p>	

Final Preparation Phase



The aim of the Final Preparation Phase is to bring all of your skills and knowledge together in a final dress rehearsal before the real exam. This will be done by attempting a mock exam, **Step 8 of the Achievement Ladder**, covering the entire syllabus in four hours.

Achievement Ladder Step 8	Approx. 5.5 hours
<p>Achievement Ladder Step 8 is a 100-mark exam-standard mock exam, covering all topics.</p> <p>You should ensure that you set aside 4 hours, in a quiet space, where you will not be interrupted. Aim to complete the exam in the ACCA software, without using any of your notes, so that it is a real test of how prepared you are.</p> <p>On completion you should self-mark your paper and carry out a self-review of your answers and your exam approach.</p> <p>Estimated timings: attempting Step 8: 4 hours, reviewing feedback carefully: 1.5 hours</p>	