

**FROM  
CGMA (CIMA)  
TO CA(SA).**

**FAYMA GOVENDER CA(SA), CGMA**  
Senior Manager, Group Finance, Clientèle

*The incredible success story of how Fayma Govender CA(SA), CGMA, a working mum, overcame insurmountable obstacles on her journey to obtaining the much-coveted CA(SA) professional designation. A fascinating story of sheer exceptionalism, grit determination and personal ambition!*



**I**t is year four-of-five of the CIMA-SAICA Membership Pathway Agreement (MPA). We profile Fayma Govender who set out to achieve the Double Charter feat, CGMA, CA(SA). Fayma Govender saw the opportunity of gaining exemptions from the CTA and SAICA Board II (APC) and becoming CA(SA), by writing just 1 exam: SAICA Board I (ITC). She passed it on 1<sup>st</sup> attempt, but as she hastened to claim the CA(SA) designation, SAICA declared her case a special case that could not gain direct admission as CA(SA) under the CIMA-SAICA Agreement. She was required to either substitute her limited post-CIMA work experience for SAICA Board II (APC) Exams, or spend extra two years gaining specific work experience (articles), at a SAICA Registered Training Organisation (RTO). She chose to face the SAICA Board II (APC) Exams and also passed it 1<sup>st</sup> Time. Her journey is one of sheer exceptionalism, grit and determination in the face of maximum uncertainty, Read on:

**Hello Fayma, welcome to The CharterQuest Future CFO Magazine blog. Who is Fayma, person, career to date, where you work, and what drives you, your hopes and dreams?**

I am a mother of two young girls, a wife and a Senior Manager in the Group Finance department at Clientèle Limited. I am driven by the desire to provide my family with a life of excellence. I hope to be an inspiration and a motivator to others to achieve their dreams, for I am a firm believer that nothing is impossible.

**You were first a full CIMA member using the ACMA, CGMA designation and have just earned the Double Chartered feat, with SAICA awarding you the CA(SA) designation: How do you feel and what next?**

I am ecstatic, overwhelmed and emotional by this accomplishment. It was no mean feat but extremely worth the sacrifices, pain, tears and hardwork. I am so grateful to God and

feel privileged to be part of this elite group of professionals.

What next? A long holiday (*chuckles*) On a more serious note, I want to pursue bible studies and hope to major in biblical leadership

**How tough was the CIMA journey vs the CA(SA) Journey? Any key differences?**

Both journeys required immense discipline and focus. In terms of the syllabus, the CA(SA) Journey was highly technical. The extent of the technical matter was at a higher level which I had not experienced before. I found the CIMA syllabus easier to understand and comprehend.

There were 5 distinct courses in the SAICA pathway compared with 3 distinct courses in CIMA which makes the breadth of the SAICA pathway broader. The CA(SA) was more rigorous and intense due to the volumes of work one needed to study in a spate of one year to be ready for the ITC exam. There are only two exam sittings per year, whilst CIMA is more flexible in this regard as they offer 4 sittings per year.

Both professions require quality study support. Without this support the journey would take much longer

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to complete. CIMA has completely digitised their exams whilst SAICA ITC is still a handwritten exam. The SAICA exams are intense with students carting trolleys into the exam hall and writing exams for 6 hours a day or 8 hours in a day, in the case of the APC. CIMA case study is a 3-hour paper which is tolerable.

Both the CIMA journey and the CA(SA) Journey have added great value to my career, personal growth and have enabled me to excel in my work. I will always value being a member of both these professions and believe they will both remain relevant.

**It is clear you took advantage of the CIMA-SAICA partnership and got exempted from the requirement to do the CTA, hoping to just write 1 exam: SAICA Board I (ITC). How was that transition seeing you had not studied for the CTA, yet Board I is based on the CTA?**

I was extremely fortunate to find a reputable institution like *The CharterQuest Professional Education Institute* who spared no resources in ensuring the students were equipped with CTA knowledge required for Board I. It was difficult in the beginning but perseverance, motivation and hardwork won the race.

**Oh, many I know who took this CIMA-to-CA(SA) path, just wrote one exam (the SAICA Board I/ITC) and were granted the CA(SA), but SAICA insisted that you write Board II (APC): Why?**

The SAICA Board was presented with an unusual case in that I had only three years post my CIMA qualification therefore did not immediately qualify for the prestigious CA(SA) title. However, I had many years of practical experience therefore was exempted from articles under regulation 25. I was grateful for being exempted and that the SAICA Board acknowledged my experience. One more exam was much better than serving articles as this would have set me back both professionally and financially.

**Did you consider it fair?**

I respect the decision of the SAICA Board and believe it was fair.

**Had you known that you will be asked to do Board II, would you**

## have still pursued it?

Absolutely!

## Could CIMA and/or SAICA have negotiated or managed this aspect better?

I believe the terms of the conversion programme can be refined to provide greater transparency in the process. There are many unusual cases and if students are fully aware of what lies ahead, they can make an informed decision if they are ready to pursue the journey.

## How was SAICA Board II (APC) compared to Board I (ITC) in terms of rigor? Did you find your prior CIMA background very helpful? How so, if so?

Board I was a monster! I found APC enjoyable as it gave me the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the technical matters.

My CIMA studies were very beneficial to both Board exams, the foundation which the CIMA pathway provided assisted me in my SAICA journey. To be honest I don't think I would have been successful on my first attempts without this background knowledge.

The CIMA-SAICA partnership,

## to fast-track CA(SA)'s-to-CIMA and CIMAs-to-CA(SA) was signed in 2017 to run for an initial period of 5 years: What will you propose be reviewed in 2022 when and if it is due for extension?

The statistics provide a clear indication that CA(SA)s are finding it easier to obtain the double designation whereas the ACMA, CGMAs are struggling with the conversion.

The reduced number of attempts to write ITC places a huge pressure on students, three chances to attempt ITC would be fair. Students should be provided with guidance of applying for training exemption under regulation 25. Students should also be aware of the possibility of writing Board II.

## The statistics show that to day, only 25 CIMA members have taken the opportunity to write the ITC exams with only 12 passing, meanwhile over 100 CA's have become CIMA members? What does this say? More interest from CA(SA) to become CIMA or the flexibility afforded by CIMA vs that afforded by SAICA?

I believe many students find the CA(SA) route daunting and not achievable and that's why many students give up early. There is a greater amount of discipline, focus together with significant volumes of study materials to cover in order to write the ITC. I remember the study materials for SAICA was almost as tall as me. CIMA does provide more flexibility in achieving the designation.

## Any final word or advice to future CGMA, contemplating the Double Charter feat you have achieved?

The CA(SA) journey is one that requires discipline, perseverance and balance. It is important to not give up as nothing worth having is easy. The CA(SA) designation is worth having and it will be a great accomplishment once you have achieved it. You have what it takes just believe in yourself.

## Fayma, thank you so much for making time to inspire students out there through our magazine blog!

The Pleasure is mine! ■

## THE CIMA TO SAICA PATHWAY PROGRAM



*Badibanga Promesse, CIMA Regional Vice President for Management Accounting in Africa (left), and Dr Terence Nombembe, SAICA CEO (right) at the signing ceremony.*

In 2017, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) and the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) announced an agreement to further advance the accounting profession in South Africa by broadening access to their professional qualifications and resources.

According to the agreement, CIMA will provide an expedited pathway to the Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) designation for SAICA members who meet experience and exam requirements.

The CGMA signals mastery of management accounting globally and is held by more than 150 000 professionals around the world. SAICA members who qualify for the CGMA

will also earn membership in CIMA and the Association, gaining the support of the world's most influential body of accountants; a worldwide network of 650 000 professionals and students; and an expansive portfolio of tools to develop their competencies across practice areas.

SAICA will reciprocate, by providing an accelerated route to membership and the CA (SA) qualification for eligible CGMA designation holders ■



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