# Comments on Candidate Performance on the December 2018 Taxation Elective Examination

While most candidates appear to have properly interpreted the situations presented in the Case portion of the exam, certain candidates misinterpreted their role. In some instances, these candidates provided lengthy unrelated discussions which added little or no value to their overall response. This may have also contributed to more superficial or incomplete discussions for other areas of their response.  Candidates should ensure they are taking sufficient time to fully interpret the information presented in the case to ensure they are properly focusing on the required elements to be addressed.

Most candidates provided reasonable and sufficient analysis to support discussions in their response by applying technical knowledge to case facts. Some candidates, however, appeared to have lacked some of the technical knowledge needed to provide complete and accurate responses. For example, many candidates struggled to properly explain the tax implications of withdrawing funds from an RRSP.  In some instances, lack of technical knowledge may have also led to unsupported conclusions, for example, concluding eligibility for the life time capital gains exemption without fully analyzing the relevant criteria.

Candidates generally provided an appropriate balance between their quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Finally, while candidates generally performed well on the case portion of the exam, many candidates appeared to have struggled with some of the technical knowledge required to correctly respond to the Objective-Format questions of the exam.

## Comments on Skills

Assess the Situation: Certain candidates did not identify or attempt to address all of the required elements of the cases.  In some instances, a lack of technical knowledge may have prevented them from addressing certain required elements, or perhaps their focus was on providing unrelated discussions that were not required.

Analyze Major Issue(s): Candidates varied widely in their analysis of the issues. While most candidates provided a rich analysis of the issues, some candidates provided a very superficial analysis that would not be useful for their client.

Conclude and Advise: While most candidates presented reasonable, and convincing conclusions and/or recommendations, certain candidates provided unsupported conclusions with very little application of case facts.

Communicate: Nearly all candidates adequately communicated within their response. Language used was appropriate and quantitative information was well presented.

CPA Mindset: The majority of candidates provided professional responses catered to their client by properly applying case facts in order to add depth to their response, all the while ensuring to maintain professional and ethical standards.