

Book Review**Accounting: An Introduction**

Peter Atrill, Plymouth Business School
Eddie McLaney, Plymouth Business School

David Harvey, University of Southern Queensland

Maurice Jenner, University of Southern Queensland

Prentice Hall,

2nd Australian edition 2003

ISBN: 1740098358

Reviewed By: Dr. Themis Suwardy,
School of Accountancy,
Singapore Management University,
469 Bukit Timah Road, Singapore
259756

Email: tsuwardy@smu.edu.sg

The second Australian edition of this popular British textbook provides a comprehensive and balanced introduction to financial accounting, management accounting and the basics of financial management. Its practical and non-technical approach makes it an ideal text for students who are not majoring in accounting or finance or those studying a single introductory level accounting as part of their course. The text is written from a user perspective, demonstrating ways in which accounting statements and financial information can be used to improve the quality of decision making.

Topics are introduced gradually and the fundamental concepts are explained clearly and concisely, avoiding the use of unnecessary detail and technical jargon wherever possible. Some of the topics covered include: measuring and reporting financial position and performance, measuring and reporting cash flow, analysis of financial statement, cost-volume-profit and marginal analysis, costing, budgeting and management of working capital, and capital investment decisions. Students will appreciate a quick summary (in bullet points) at the end of each topic, grouped by the respective topic's learning objectives. The technical

aspects of accounting cycle included as an appendix and may be skipped, depending on the audience and objective of the course.

The text is particularly suited for those studying off-campus. Within each chapter there are numerous examples and activities that prompt the readers to think about the concepts being presented and self-assessment questions are posed at appropriate parts of the chapter. Suggested solutions to activity tasks, self-assessment questions, as well as selected answers to the text's end of chapter application exercises, are provided in the text. In addition, the accompanying workbook (Jenner and Silvester), provides additional multiple-choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blanks, classification and practical questions and solutions.

The 2nd Australian edition has been further enhanced with articles and case studies that are both current and relevant, including recent publications in the print press and companies such as Qantas Airways, Smorgon Steel and Freedom Group. For the latter part of the book which are more management accounting oriented, the text offers cases that are both illustrative and useful.

If one is to find fault with the text, it would be that the user perspective adopted is largely for someone inside an organization. External user perspective is limited to somewhat basic financial statement and analysis. However, an instructor or student can easily pick any other financial accounting books that examine the financial statement items more in-depth, should this be necessary.

