

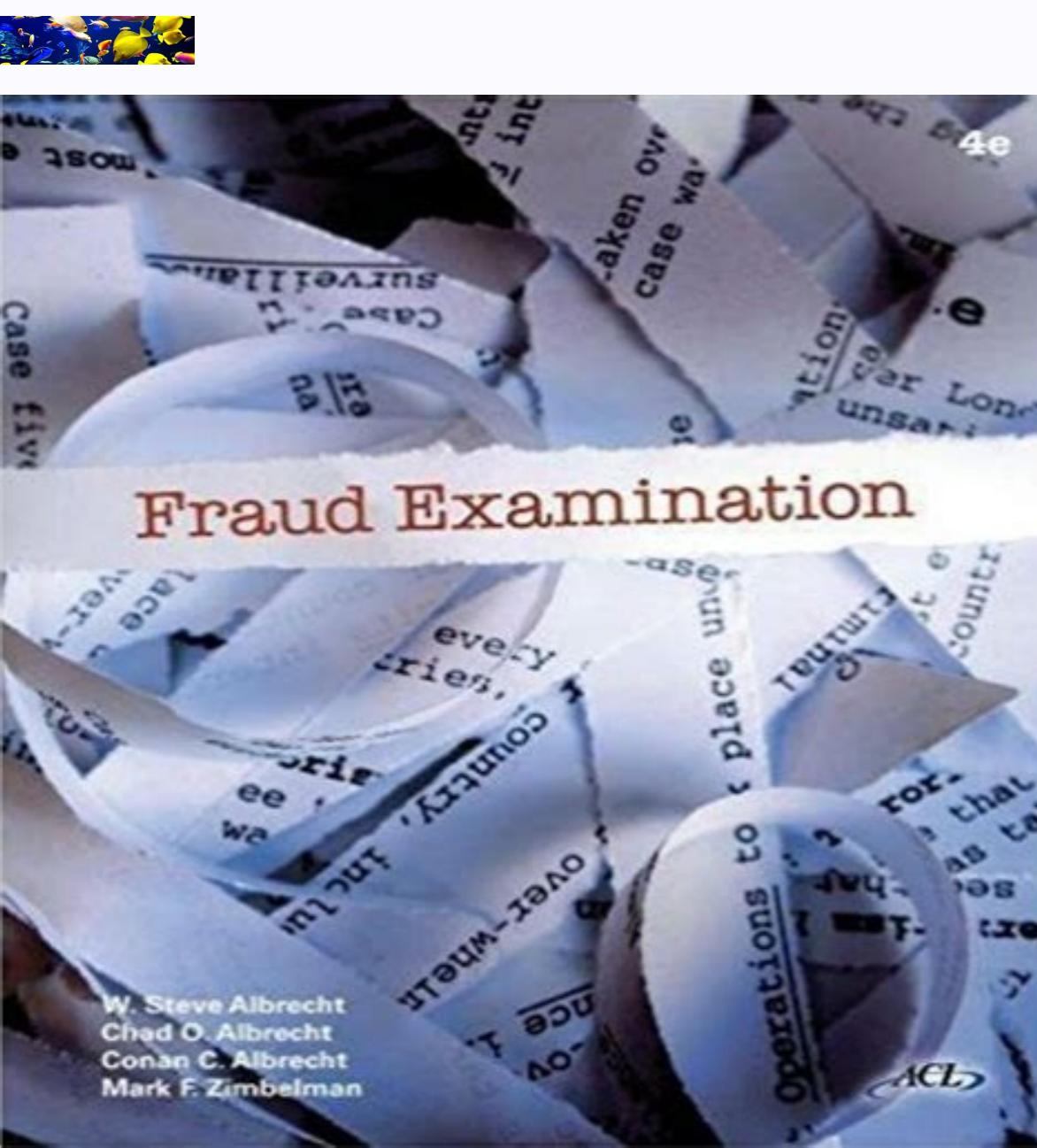


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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF AUDIT AND ASSURANCE

1. What is assurance and what are the different types and levels of assurance?

An **assurance engagement** is defined as 'an engagement in which an assurance practitioner expresses a conclusion designed to enhance the degree of confidence of the **intended users** other than the **responsible party** about the outcome of the evaluation or measurement of a **subject matter against criteria**.' An assurance practitioner may be, for example, an auditor working in public practice providing assurance on financial reports of publicly listed companies or a consultant providing assurance about environmental disclosures.

- 'intended users' - the people for whom the auditor prepares their report. Example: shareholders, creditors, employees
- 'responsible party' - the person or organisation responsible for preparing the financial statements. Example: company management
- 'subject matter' – that which the auditor is expressing a conclusion on. Example: financial reports
- 'criteria' – the rules or principles by which the subject matter is being evaluated. Example: Accounting standards and interpretations and Corporations laws

2. What are the different responsibilities of financial report preparers and auditors?

THE MOST COMMON ASSURANCE SERVICES ARE:

1. FINANCIAL REPORT AUDITS

An engagement designed to express an opinion about whether the report is prepared in all material respects in accordance with a financial reporting framework (ASA 200, para. 11; ISA 200, para 11).

Financial report audit provides reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is prepared in all material respects in accordance with a financial reporting framework. Under sections 295(4)(c) and 295A of the Act, directors of the reporting entity must declare whether the reporting entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due, whether the financial records have been properly maintained, whether the financial report and notes comply with Australian Accounting Standards including interpretations, and whether the financial report and notes give a **true and fair view** - refers to the consistent and faithful application of accounting standards in accordance with the financial reporting framework when preparing the financial report (ASA 200, para. 13; ISA 200, para.13) The auditor must be independent of the company they audit, exercise due professional care, and comply with Auditing and Assurance.

LIMITATIONS OF A FINANCIAL REPORT AUDIT:

- There is no guarantee that the financial report is free from error or fraud.
- The nature of audit procedures and processes are required to be performed within a reasonable period and at a reasonable cost. (ASA 200, ISA 200)
- Judgement is required in the process of preparation of the financial statements.

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