

UNIT 3 : ACCOUNTING TERMINOLOGY - GLOSSARY

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- ◆ Define basic accounting terms; and
- ◆ Understand the application of these accounting terms while recording transactions and events.



ACCOUNTING TERMINOLOGY - GLOSSARY

Acceptance

The drawee's signed assent on bill of exchange, to the order of the drawer. This term is also used to describe a bill of exchange that has been accepted.

Accounting policies

Accounting policies are the specific accounting principles and the methods of applying those principles adopted by an enterprise in the preparation and presentation of financial statements.

Accrual

Recognition of revenues and costs as they are earned or incurred (and not as money is received or paid). It includes recognition of transactions relating to assets and liabilities as they occur irrespective of the actual receipts or payments.

Accrual/Mercantile Basis of Accounting

The method of recording transactions by which *revenues, costs, assets and liabilities* are reflected in the accounts in the period in which they accrue. The 'accrual basis of accounting' includes considerations relating to *deferrals, allocations, depreciation and amortisation*. This basis is also referred to as *mercantile basis of accounting*.

Accrued Asset

A developing but not yet enforceable claim against another person which accumulates with the passage of time or the rendering of service or otherwise. It may arise from the rendering of services (including the use of money) which at the date of accounting have been partly performed, and are not yet billable.

Accrued Expense

An expense which has been incurred in an accounting period but for which no enforceable claim has become due in that period against the enterprise. It may arise from the purchase of services (including the use of money) which at the date of accounting have been only partly performed, and are not yet billable.

Accrued Liability

A developing but not yet enforceable claim by another person which accumulates with the passage of time or the receipt of service or otherwise. It may arise from the purchase of services (including the use of money) which at the date of accounting have.

Accrued Revenue

Revenue which has been earned in an accounting period but in respect of which no enforceable claim has become due in that period by the enterprise. It may arise from the rendering of services (including the use of money) which at the date of accounting have been partly performed, and are not yet billable.

Accumulated Depletion

The total to date of the periodic depletion charges on wasting assets.

Accumulated Depreciation

The total to date of the periodic depreciation charges on depreciable assets.

Advance

Payment made on account of, but before completion of, a contract, or before acquisition of goods or receipt of services.

Amortised Value

The *amortizable* amount less any portion already provided by way of *amortization*.

Annual Report

The information provided annually by the management of an enterprise to the owners and other interested persons concerning its operations and financial position. It includes the information statutorily required, e.g., in the case of a company, the *balance sheet*, *profit and loss statement* and notes on accounts, the *auditor's report* thereon, and the report of the Board of Directors. It also includes other information voluntarily provided e.g., *value added statement*, graphs, charts, etc.

Appropriation Account

An account sometimes included as a separate section of the *profit and loss statement* showing application of *profits* towards *dividends*, *reserves*, etc.

Assets

Tangible objects or intangible rights owned by an enterprise and carrying probable future benefits.

Authorised Share Capital

The number and par value, of each class of shares that an enterprise may issue in accordance with its instrument of incorporation. This is sometimes referred to as **nominal share capital**.

Average Cost

The cost of an item at a point of time as determined by applying an average of the cost of all items of the same nature over a period. When weightages are also applied in the computation, it is termed as **weighted average cost**.

Bad Debts

Debts owed to an enterprise which are considered to be irrecoverable.

Balance Sheet

A statement of the financial position of an enterprise as at a given date, which exhibits its *assets*, *liabilities*, *capital*, *reserves* and other account balances at their respective *book values*.

Bill of Exchange

An instrument in writing containing an unconditional order, signed by the maker, directing a certain person to pay a certain sum of money only, to or to the order of a certain person or to the bearer of the instrument.

Bonus Shares

Shares allotted by capitalization of the reserves or surplus of a corporate enterprise.

Book Value

The amount at which an item appears in the books of account or financial statements. It does not refer to any particular basis on which the amount is determined e.g., cost, replacement value, etc.

Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs are interest and other costs incurred by an enterprise in connection with the borrowing of funds.

Bond/Debenture

A formal document constituting acknowledgment of a debt by an enterprise usually given under its common seal and normally containing provisions regarding payment of interest, repayment of principal and security, if any. It is transferable in the appropriate manner.

Call

A demand pursuant to terms of issue to pay a part or whole of the balance remaining payable on shares or *debentures* after allotment.

Called-up Share Capital

That part of the subscribed share capital which shareholders have been required to pay.

Capital

Generally refers to the amount invested in an enterprise by its owners e.g. *paid-up share capital* in a corporate enterprise. It is also used to refer to the interest of owners in the assets of an enterprise.

Capital Assets

Assets, including *investments* not held for sale, conversion or consumption in the ordinary course of business.

Capital Commitment

Future *liability* for capital expenditure in respect of which contracts have been made.

Capital Employed

The finances deployed by an enterprise in its *net fixed assets*, *investments* and *working capital*. Capital employed in an operation may, however, exclude *investments* made outside that operation.

Capital Profit/Capital Loss

Excess of the proceeds realised from the sale, transfer, or exchange of the whole or a part of a capital asset over its cost. When the result of this computation is negative, it is referred to as **capital loss**.

Capital Reserve

A *reserve* of a corporate enterprise which is not available for distribution as *dividend*.

Capital Work-in-progress

Expenditure on *capital assets* which are in the process of construction or completion.

Cash

Cash comprises cash on hand and demand deposits with banks

Cash equivalents

Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible into known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

Cash Basis of Accounting

The method of recording transactions by which *revenues* and *costs* and *assets* and *liabilities* are reflected in the accounts in the period in which actual receipts or actual payments are made.

Cash Discount

A reduction granted by a supplier from the invoiced price in consideration of immediate payment or payment within a stipulated period.

Cash Profit

The *net profit* as increased by non-cash costs, such as *depreciation*, *amortization*, etc. When the result of the computation is negative, it is termed as **cash loss**.

Carrying amount

Carrying amount is the amount at which an asset is recognized in the balance sheet, net of any accumulated amortization and accumulated impairment losses thereon.

Charge

An encumbrance on an asset to secure an indebtedness or other obligations. It may be fixed or floating.

Cheque

A *bill of exchange* drawn upon a specified banker and not expressed to be payable otherwise than on demand.

Collateral Security

Security which is given in addition to the principal security against the same *liability* or obligation.

Costs of disposal

Costs of disposal are incremental costs directly attributable to the disposal of an asset, excluding finance costs and income tax expense.

Contingency

A contingency is a condition or situation, the ultimate outcome of which, gain or loss, will be known or determined only on the occurrence, or non-occurrence, of one or more uncertain future events.

Contingent Asset

An *asset* the existence, ownership or value of which may be known or determined only on the occurrence

or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.

Contingent Liability

An obligation relating to an existing condition or situation which may arise in future depending on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.

Contra Account

One or two or more accounts which partially or wholly off-set another or other accounts.

Cost

The amount of *expenditure* incurred on or attributable to a specified article, product or activity.

Cost of Purchase

The purchase price including duties and taxes, freight inwards and other *expenditure* directly attributable to acquisition, less *trade discounts*, rebates, duty drawbacks, and subsidies in respect of such purchase.

Cost of Goods Sold

The cost of goods sold during an accounting period. In manufacturing operations, it includes (i) cost of materials; (ii) labour and factory overheads; selling and administrative expenses are normally excluded.

Conversion Cost

Cost incurred to convert raw materials or components into finished or semi-finished products. This normally includes costs which are specifically attributable to units of production, i.e., direct labour, direct expenses and subcontracted work, and production overheads as applicable in accordance with either the *direct cost* or *absorption costing method*. Production overheads exclude expenses which relate to general administration, finance, selling and distribution.

Convertible Debenture

A *debenture* which gives the holder a right to its conversion, wholly or partly, in shares in accordance with the terms of issue.

Cumulative Dividend

A *dividend* payable on *cumulative preference shares* which, if unpaid, accumulates as a claim against the earnings of a corporate enterprise, before any distribution is made to the other shareholders.

Cumulative Preference Shares

A class of preference shares entitled to payment of *cumulative dividends*. Preference shares are always deemed to be cumulative, unless they are expressly made non-cumulative.

Current Assets

Cash and other assets that are expected to be converted into cash or consumed in the production of goods or rendering of services in the normal course of business.

Current Liability

Liability including loans, deposits and bank overdraft which falls due for payment in a relatively short period, normally not more than twelve months.

Deferral

Postponement of recognition of a revenue or expense after its related receipt or payment (or incurrence of a *liability*) to a subsequent period to which it applies. Common examples of deferrals include prepaid rent and taxes, unearned subscriptions received in advance by newspapers and magazine selling companies, etc.

Deficiency

The excess of *liabilities* over *assets* of an enterprise at a given date. The debit balance in the *profit and loss statement*.

Deficit

The debit balance in the profit and loss statement.

Depletion

A measure of exhaustion of a wasting asset represented by periodic write off of cost or other substituted value.

Depreciation

Depreciation is a measure of the wearing out, consumption or other loss of value of a depreciable asset arising from use, effluxion of time or obsolescence through technology and market changes. Depreciation is allocated so as to charge a fair proportion of the depreciable amount in each accounting period during the expected useful life of the asset. Depreciation includes amortisation of assets whose useful life is predetermined.

Depreciable amount

Depreciable amount of a depreciable asset is its historical cost, or other amount substituted for historical cost in the financial statements, less the estimated residual value.

Depreciable assets

Depreciable assets are assets which

- (i) are expected to be used during more than one accounting period; and
- (ii) have a limited useful life; and
- (iii) are held by an enterprise for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes and not for the purpose of sale in the ordinary course of business.

Depreciation Method

Any method of calculating depreciation for an accounting period.

Depreciation Rate

A percentage applied to the historical cost or the substituted amount of a *depreciable asset* (or in case of *diminishing balance method*, the historical cost or the substituted amount less *accumulated depreciation*).

Diminishing Balance Method

A method under which the periodic charge for *depreciation* of an *asset* is computed by applying a fixed percentage to its historical cost or substituted amount less *accumulated depreciation* (net book value). This is also referred to as **written down value method**.

Discount

A reduction from a list price, quoted price or invoiced price. It also refers to the price for obtaining payment on a bill before its maturity.

Dividend

A distribution to shareholders out of profits or reserves available for this purpose.

Entity Concept

The view of the relationship between the accounting entity and its owners which regards the entity as a separate person, distinct and apart from its owners.

Equity Share

A share which is not a preference share. Also sometimes called **ordinary share**.

Exchange difference

Exchange difference is the difference resulting from reporting the same number of units of a foreign currency in the reporting currency at different exchange rates.

Expenditure

Incurring a *liability*, disbursement of cash or transfer of property for the purpose of obtaining *assets*, goods or services.

Expense

A cost relating to the operations of an accounting period or to the *revenue* earned during the period or the benefits of which do not extend beyond that period.

Expired Cost

That portion of an *expenditure* from which no further benefit is expected. Also termed as **expense**.

Extraordinary items

Extraordinary items are income or expenses that arise from events or transactions that are clearly distinct from the ordinary activities of the enterprise and, therefore, are not expected to recur frequently or regularly.

Fair value

Fair value is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arm's length transaction.

Fair Market Value

The price that would be agreed to in an open and unrestricted market between knowledgeable and willing parties dealing at arm's length who are fully informed and are not under any compulsion to transact.

First Charge

A *charge* having priority over other charges.

First In, First Out (FIFO)

Computation of the cost of items sold or consumed during a period as though they were sold or consumed in order of their acquisition.

Fixed asset

Asset held with the intention of being used for the purpose of producing or providing goods or services and is not held for sale in the normal course of business.

Fixed Cost

That cost of production which by its very nature remains relatively unaffected in a defined period of time by variations in the volume of production.

Fixed Deposit

Deposit for a specified period and at specified rate of interest.

Fixed or Specific Charge

A *charge* which attaches to a particular *asset* which is identified when the charge is created, and the identity of the *asset* does not change during the subsistence of the *charge*.

Floating Charge

A general *charge* on some or all *assets* of an enterprise which are not attached to specific *assets* and are given as security against a debt.

Financial Instrument

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to both a financial asset of one enterprise and a financial liability or equity shares of another enterprise.

Foreign currency

Foreign currency is a currency other than the reporting currency of an enterprise.

Forfeited Share

A share to which title is lost by a member for non-payment of call money or default in fulfilling any engagement between members or expulsion of members where the articles specifically provide therefor.

Free Reserve

A *reserve* the utilization of which is not restricted in any manner.

Functional Classification

A system of classification of *expenses* and *revenues* and the corresponding *assets* and *liabilities* to each function or activity, rather than by reference to their nature.

Fund

An account usually of the nature of a *reserve* or a *provision* which is represented by specifically earmarked *assets*.

Fundamental Accounting Assumptions

Basic accounting assumptions which underlie the preparation and presentation of financial statements. They are *going concern*, consistency and *accrual*. Usually, they are not specifically stated because their acceptance and use are assumed. Disclosure is necessary if they are not followed.

Gain

A monetary benefit, *profit* or advantage resulting from a transaction or group of transactions.

General Reserve

A *revenue reserve* which is not earmarked for a specific purpose.

Going Concern Assumption

An accounting assumption according to which an enterprise is viewed as continuing in operation for the foreseeable future. It is assumed that the enterprise has neither the intention nor the necessity of liquidation or of curtailing materially the scale of its operations.

Goodwill

An *intangible asset* arising from business connections or trade name or reputation of an enterprise.

Gross Margin or Gross Profit

The excess of the proceeds of goods sold and services rendered during a period over their *cost*, before taking into account administration, selling, distribution and financing expenses. When the result of this computation is negative it is referred to as **gross loss**.

Government

Government refers to government, government agencies and similar bodies whether local, national or international.

Government grants

Government grants are assistance by government in cash or kind to an enterprise for past or future compliance with certain conditions. They exclude those forms of government assistance which cannot reasonably have a value placed upon them and transactions with government which cannot be distinguished from the normal trading transactions of the enterprise.

Gross book value

Gross book value of a fixed asset is its historical cost or other amount substituted for historical cost in the books of account or financial statements. When this amount is shown net of accumulated depreciation, it is termed as net book value.

Income and Expenditure Statement

A financial statement, often prepared by non-profit making enterprises like clubs, associations etc. to present their *revenues* and *expenses* for an accounting period and to show the excess of *revenues* over *expenses* (or vice versa) for that period. It is similar to profit and loss statement and is also called **revenue and expense statement**.

Intangible Asset

Asset which does not have a physical identity e.g. *goodwill*, patents, copyright etc.

Inventories are assets:

- (a) held for sale in the ordinary course of business;
- (b) in the process of production for such sale; or
- (c) in the form of materials or supplies to be consumed in the production process or in the rendering of services.

Investment

Expenditure on assets held to earn interest, *income*, *profit* or other benefits.

Investments

Assets held not for operational purposes or for rendering services i.e. assets other than *fixed assets* or *current assets* (e.g. securities, shares, *debentures*, immovable properties).

Issued Share Capital

That portion of the *authorized share capital* which has actually been offered for subscription. This includes any *bonus shares* allotted by the corporate enterprise.

Joint venture

A joint venture is a contractual arrangement whereby two or more parties undertake an economic activity, which is subject to joint control.

Last In, First Out (LIFO)

Computation of the cost of items sold or consumed during a period on the basis that the items last acquired were sold or consumed first.

Liability

The financial obligation of an enterprise other than owners' funds.

Lien

Right of one person to satisfy a claim against another by holding or retaining possession of that other's *assets/property*.

Long-term Liability

Liability which does not fall due for payment in a relatively short period, i.e., normally a period not more than twelve months.

Lease

A lease is an agreement whereby the lessor conveys to the lessee in return for a payment or series of payments the right to use an asset for an agreed period of time.

Materiality

An accounting concept according to which all relatively important and relevant items, i.e., items the knowledge of which might influence the decisions of the user of the financial statements are disclosed in the financial statements.

Mortgage

A transfer of interest in specific immovable property for the purpose of securing a loan advanced, or to be advanced, an existing or future debt or the performance of an engagement which may give rise to a pecuniary *liability*. The security is redeemed when the loan is repaid or the debt discharged or the obligations performed.

Net Assets/Shareholders' funds/Net Worth

The excess of the *book value* of *assets* (other than *fictitious assets*) of an enterprise over its *liabilities*. This is also referred to as **net worth** or **shareholders' funds**.

Net Fixed Assets

Fixed assets less accumulated depreciation thereon up-to-date.

Net Profit/Net loss

The excess of *revenue* over *expenses* during a particular accounting period. When the result of this computation is negative, it is referred to as **net loss**. The net profit may be shown before or after tax.

Net realizable value

Net realizable value is the estimated selling price in the ordinary course of business less the estimated costs of completion and the estimated costs necessary to make the sale.

Obsolescence

Diminution in the value of an asset by reason of its becoming out-of date or less useful due to technological changes, improvement in production methods, change in market demand for the product or service output of the asset, or legal or other restrictions.

Operating Profit

The *net profit* arising from the normal operations and activities of an enterprise without taking account of extraneous transactions and expenses of a purely financial nature.

Paid-up Share Capital

That part of the *subscribed share capital* for which consideration in cash or otherwise has been received. This includes *bonus shares* allotted by the corporate enterprise.

Preference Share Capital

That part of the *share capital* of a corporate enterprise which enjoys preferential rights in respect of payments of fixed *dividend* and repayment of *capital*. Preference shares may also have full or partial participating rights in surplus profits or surplus capital.

Preliminary Expenses

Expenses relating to the formation of an enterprise. These include legal, accounting and share issue expenses incurred for formation of the enterprise.

Prepaid Expense

Payment for expense in an accounting period, the benefit for which will accrue in the subsequent accounting period(s).

Prime Cost

The total *cost* of direct materials, direct wages and other direct production expenses.

Prior Period Item

Prior period items are income or expenses which arise in the current period as a result of errors or omissions in the preparation of the financial statements of one or more prior periods.

Profit/Loss

A general term for the excess of *revenue* over related *cost*. When the result of this computation is negative it is referred to as **loss**.

Profit and Loss Account

A financial statement which presents the *revenues* and *expenses* of an enterprise for an accounting period and shows the excess of *revenues* over *expenses* (or vice versa). It is also known as **profit and loss account**.

Promissory Note

An instrument in writing (not being a bank note or currency note) containing an unconditional undertaking, signed by the maker, to pay a certain sum of money only to, or to the order of, a certain person or to the bearer of the instrument.

Provision

An amount written off or retained by way of providing for *depreciation* or diminution in value of assets or retained by way of providing for any known *liability* the amount of which cannot be determined with substantial accuracy.

Provision for Doubtful Debts

A *provision* made for debts considered doubtful of recovery.

Prudence

A concept of care and caution used in accounting according to which (in view of the uncertainty attached to future events) *profits* are not anticipated, but recognised only when realised, though not necessarily in cash. Under this concept, *provision* is made for all known *liabilities* and losses, even though the amount cannot be determined with certainty and represents only a best estimate in the light of available information.

Redeemable Preference Share

The preference share that is repayable either after a fixed or determinable period or at any time decided by the management (by giving due notice), under certain conditions prescribed by the instrument of incorporation or the terms of issue.

Redemption

Repayment as per given terms normally used in connection with preference shares and debentures.

Reserve

The portion of earnings, receipts or other surplus of an enterprise (whether capital or revenue) appropriated by the management for a general or a specific purpose other than a *provision* for *depreciation* or diminution in the value of assets or for a known *liability*. The reserves are primarily of two types: *capital reserves* and *revenue reserves*.

Revaluation Reserve

A *reserve* created on the revaluation of *assets* or *net assets* of an enterprise represented by the surplus of the estimated replacement cost or estimated market values over the *book values* thereof.

Residual value

Residual value is the amount which an enterprise expects to obtain for an asset at the end of its useful life after deducting the expected costs of disposal.

Revenue/Income

Revenue is the gross inflow of cash, receivables or other consideration arising in the course of the ordinary activities of an enterprise from the sale of goods, from the rendering of services, and from the use by others

of enterprise resources yielding interest, royalties and dividends. Revenue is measured by the charges made to customers or clients for goods supplied and services rendered to them and by the charges and rewards arising from the use of resources by them. In an agency relationship, the revenue is the amount of commission and not the gross inflow of cash, receivables or other consideration.

Revenue Reserve

Any reserve other than a capital reserve.

Right Share

An allotment of shares on the issue of fresh *capital* by a corporate enterprise to which a shareholder is entitled on payment, by virtue of his holding certain shares in the enterprise in proportion to the number of shares already held by him. (Shares allotted to certain categories of *debenture* holders pursuant to the rights enjoyed by them are sometimes called right shares)

Sales Turnover/Gross Turnover/Gross Sales

The aggregate amount for which sales are effected or services rendered by an enterprise. The terms **gross turnover** and **net turnover** (or **gross sales** and **net sales**) are sometimes used to distinguish the sales aggregate before and after deduction of returns and trade discounts.

Secured Loan

Loan secured wholly or partly against an asset.

Share Capital

Aggregate amount of money paid or credited as paid on the shares and/ or stocks of a corporate enterprise.

Share Discount

The excess of the face value of shares over their issue price.

Shareholders' Equity

The interest of the shareholders in the *net assets* of a corporate enterprise. However, in the case of liquidation it is represented by the residual assets after meeting prior claims.

Share Issue Expenses

Costs incurred in connection with the issue and allotment of shares. These include legal and professional fees, advertising expenses, printing costs, underwriting commission, brokerage, and also expenses in connection with the issue of prospectus and allotment of shares.

Share warrants

Share warrants or options are financial instruments that give the holder the right to acquire equity shares.

Securities Premium

The excess of the issue price of shares over their face value.

Sinking Fund

A *fund* created for the repayment of a *liability* or for the replacement of an asset.

Straight Line Method

The method under which the periodic charge for *depreciation* is computed by dividing the *depreciable amount* of a *depreciable asset* by the estimated number of years of its useful life.

Subscribed Share Capital

That portion of the *issued share capital* which has actually been subscribed and allotted. This includes any *bonus shares* allotted by the corporate enterprise.

Substance over Form

An accounting concept according to which the substance and not merely the legal form of transactions and events governs their accounting treatment and presentation in financial statements.

Sundry Creditors / Trade Creditors/Trade payables

Amount owed by an enterprise on account of goods purchased or services received or in respect of contractual obligations. Also termed as **trade creditors** or **account payables** or **Trade payables**.

Sundry Debtors / Trade Debtors/ Trade Receivables

Person from whom amounts are due for goods sold or services rendered or in respect of contractual obligations. Also termed as **debtors**, **trade debtors**, **account receivables**, **trade receivables**.

Surplus

Credit balance in the *profit and loss statement* after providing for proposed appropriations, e.g., *dividend* or *reserves*.

Trade Discount

A reduction granted by a supplier from the list price of goods or services on business considerations other than for prompt payment.

Unexpired Cost

That portion of an *expenditure* whose benefit has not yet been exhausted.

Unissued Share Capital

That portion of the *authorised share capital* for which shares have not been offered for subscription.

Unpaid Dividend

Dividend which has been declared by a corporate enterprise but has not been paid, or the warrant or *cheque* in respect whereof has not been dispatched within the prescribed period.

Useful life

Useful life is either (i) the period over which a depreciable asset is expected to be used by the enterprise; or (ii) the number of production or similar units expected to be obtained from the use of the asset by the enterprise

 **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE****QUESTION**

Define following terms:

1. Accrual Basis of Accounting
2. Amortisation
3. Contingent Asset
4. Contingent Liability

ANSWER**1. Accrual Basis of Accounting**

The method of recording transactions by which *revenues, costs, assets and liabilities* are reflected in the accounts in the period in which they accrue.

2. Amortisation

The gradual and systematic writing off of an asset or an account over an appropriate period.

3. Contingent Asset

An *asset* the existence, ownership or value of which may be known or determined only on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.

4. Contingent Liability

An obligation relating to an existing condition or situation which may arise in future depending on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.