



The Institute of
Internal Auditors
Malaysia

MY JOURNEY TOWARDS BEING A CIA

Name: Mohd Zaihan Bin Jamil

Current Employment: Head of Internal Audit & Risk Management

Work Experience: He has extensive experience in internal audit, risk, and compliance across leading organisations in Malaysia. He began his career with Telekom Malaysia Berhad, progressing from internal audit to risk and compliance roles over nearly a decade. He later served as Manager, Internal Audit at Malaysia Airlines Berhad, followed by governance and risk leadership roles at Allo Technology and Edotco Group. He currently serves as the Head of Internal Audit & Risk Management at Farm Fresh Berhad.



Education Background: He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from Multimedia University, Cyberjaya (2009) and is a Certified Internal Auditor (CIA), accredited by The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) in 2022.

IIAM Membership Category: CMIIA, CIA

1. Why did you decide to pursue a career as an internal auditor?

I pursued a career as an internal auditor because it offers an opportunity to understand the organisation from every aspect, be it strategy, finance, operations, and people etc. Additionally, it challenges me to, think critically, act with integrity, and communicate effectively with various stakeholders. For me, it's not just about finding gaps; it's about adding value to the organisation through continuous improvement and good governance.



2. How important is an Internal Auditor's role in the organisation?

Internal auditors play a crucial role as a strategic partner to the management and the Board. We provide independent assurance that processes are effective, and risks are managed adequately. More importantly, we promote a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

3. What is the typical challenge internal auditors generally face? And amongst them, can you highlight what would be one of the biggest challenge?

One of the most common challenges is balancing our assurance role with the need to maintain strong relationship with management.

Apart from that, the biggest challenge for internal auditors is to keep pace with emerging risks such as AI, cybersecurity and ESG. Continuous upskilling and adaptability are crucial for internal auditors to remain relevant, value-adding and future-focused.

4. Does the Institute play a role in supporting your Internal Auditor scope of work? If yes, in what ways? And if no, what can we do better?

Yes. IIA Malaysia has been instrumental in my professional journey. They provide relevant training, networking, and knowledge sharing. The Institute provides a platform for internal auditors to stay connected with best practices and industry trends.



5. Would you recommend IIA Malaysia to your fellow IA colleagues?

Yes.

6. What motivated you to take the CIA exam?

I always believe that passing the CIA exam and becoming a CIA will boost by career progression and credibility, which will strengthen my ability to lead a team with confidence.

7. What were the challenges you encountered when attempting the CIA exam?

Striking the balance between work commitment, study, personal and family time was the biggest challenge. Also, the range of the syllabus required discipline and consistency.

8. How did you manage your study time while working?

For me, I created a flexible study plan. I spent short and focused study sessions after work and a few hours on weekends. I also set a tracker to stay motivated and remain consistent.



9. As a CIA certified professional, where do you envision yourself?

I envision myself as a leader who strives for good governance, effective risk management and controls. The certification has strengthened my confidence to take on strategic roles and contribute to shaping a more ethical, and responsible organisation. I also hope to mentor aspiring auditors and give back to the profession.

10. How important is CIA for an internal auditor?

The CIA is the gold standard for internal auditors. It provides not only technical competence but also credibility and recognition. It demonstrates commitment to professional excellence and gives a global perspective on internal audit practices. For any auditor who aspires to grow, the CIA is the go-to program.

11. Please provide 3 main advice for those attempting to take the CIA examination?

- Be consistent — even short, daily study sessions will build strong momentum.
- Understand the concepts, not just memorise - the CIA tests how you think and apply the concept with real life scenario.
- Stay the course and keep going - remember why you started; the effort is temporary, but the achievement lasts a lifetime.