

APPROVED LEARNING PARTNER

# APPROVAL GUIDE

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# Introduction

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ACCA's Approved Learning Partner programme gives formal recognition to leading learning providers of the quality tuition and support that they offer ACCA students. It is the platform from which we can develop a mutually beneficial relationship, increasing the global availability of effective and innovative ACCA course delivery and first-class student support.

To become an Approved Learning Partner, you are expected to demonstrate that you meet challenging performance targets, representing global best practice in the provision of ACCA course tuition and support.

The aims of ACCA's Approved Learning Partner programme are to:

- approve the quality ACCA learning providers, who have demonstrated their success in supporting students through the ACCA qualifications
- support our learning partners in providing students with the opportunity to succeed.

# Levels of approval

The levels of approval are:

- Gold
- Platinum.

Approval is given to learning providers who demonstrate that they meet the challenging performance targets set by ACCA. Gold and Platinum approvals are granted only to quality learning providers that ACCA is confident to recommend to students.

## GOLD

Gold approval is the first level of the programme and requires learning providers to meet a range of challenging performance targets covering the institution's overall management and, more specifically, its ACCA course management and delivery.

In determining a learning provider's eligibility for Gold approval, ACCA gives that provider flexibility in demonstrating how it meets the performance targets.

Gold approval can be given to learning providers who are teaching any of ACCA's qualifications – ACCA Qualification, Foundation Level qualifications (including CAT) – either through face-to-face tuition, distance learning/e-learning or blended learning.

As part of the approval process, all learning providers will undergo a pre-approval site visit by a representative of ACCA. Once a learning provider becomes an Approved Learning Partner, approval will be renewed on an annual basis.

## PLATINUM

Progression to Platinum approval will be encouraged from existing Gold Approved Learning Partners who:

- are able to demonstrate excellence in their course management and delivery
- have met the Platinum pass rate targets at three consecutive examination sessions

- continuously receive positive student feedback.

Teaching the ACCA Qualification is a pre-requisite of Platinum approval.

## PROGRESSION TO PLATINUM

Approved Learning Partners may not commence the process for Platinum approval before they have received confirmation from ACCA's accreditation team that they have met the Platinum pass rate targets for three consecutive examination sessions and are eligible to apply. This will normally happen within three weeks of the examination results release in February and August respectively.

Approved Learning Partners who wish to commence the Platinum approval process in response to invitation must submit their completed application form before 15 April following the December examination session and 15 October following the June examination session (or by alternative closing date communicated by ACCA in the invitation to commence Platinum approval process), in order for Platinum approval visits to be conducted and the outcome confirmed before the next session's examination results are released.

Approved Learning Partners who do not apply for Platinum approval before this deadline, and who fail to meet the Platinum pass rate targets in the subsequent examination session, will no longer be eligible to apply for Platinum approval. Under these circumstances the Approved Learning Partner would be required to meet the Platinum pass rate targets for a **further three consecutive examination sessions** for eligibility to be regained.

Platinum approval will only be awarded when it has been demonstrated that the Approved Learning Partner meets all criteria for Platinum approval.

Gold Approved Learning Partners may not make reference to meeting the Platinum pass rate targets in any advertising or promotional materials prior to receiving confirmation of the award of Platinum status in writing from ACCA's accreditation team.

APPROVAL AT A GLANCE	GOLD	PLATINUM
Approval prerequisite	Teaching any qualification – ACCA Qualification, Foundation Level qualifications (including CAT)	Teaching at least the ACCA Qualification plus already achieved Gold approval
Delivery	Face-to-face, e-learning/ distance learning or blended learning	Face-to-face, e-learning/ distance learning or blended learning
Approval requirements	Performance targets	Performance targets plus Pass-rate targets
Approval period	One year	Three years
Renewal fee	Annual	Annual
Monitoring	Annual	Annual
Support	Continuous	Continuous

Currently gold approval does not include pass rate targets

# Benefits of approval

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## **BENEFITS OF GOLD APPROVAL**

As a Gold Approved Learning Partner, you benefit from ACCA's recommendation of your institution as a quality learning provider.

## **MARKETING**

All Approved Learning Partners will receive an approval certificate and an Approved Learning Partner logo.

ACCA is keen to support Approved Learning Partners in joint local marketing initiatives eg joint advertising activity, promotional brochures and posters.

If you would like to explore this opportunity please contact your local office or ACCA's accreditation team at [tuition@accaglobal.com](mailto:tuition@accaglobal.com)

## **ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES WITH ACCA**

Advertising opportunities on ACCA's website and in ACCA publications are available to all Approved Learning Partners through ACCA's third-party partner, Educate. To enquire about ACCA advertising opportunities, please refer to the list of contacts at on [www.accaglobal.com/contacts/corporate/advertising](http://www.accaglobal.com/contacts/corporate/advertising)

## **DIRECT MAILING SERVICE**

ACCA Access, ACCA's direct mailing service is available to all Approved Learning Partners through ACCA's third-party partner, Educate. To enquire about ACCA Access, please contact Nick Willmer at [nickw@accamedia.com](mailto:nickw@accamedia.com) or +44 (0)20 7902 1673.

## **ACCESS TO ONLINE SERVICES**

ACCA's online services for Approved Learning Partners can be accessed by following the link to *myACCA* on [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) and logging-in using your username and password.

Online services include the facility to maintain your details, renew your application, use the results service and access past results analysis reports, as well as access to ACCA's online Professional Ethics Module. If you have forgotten your username and/or password, please contact the accreditation team at [tuition@accaglobal.com](mailto:tuition@accaglobal.com)

## **RESULTS ANALYSIS REPORTS**

Approved Learning Partners benefit from free results analysis reports at each examination session.

## **ENTRY ON LEARNING PROVIDER DIRECTORY**

Approved Learning Partners have priority entry on ACCA's Learning Provider Directory, with up to 100 words of promotional text. To add or amend your promotional text, please send an email to [tuition@accaglobal.com](mailto:tuition@accaglobal.com)

## **ACCA LEARNING PROVIDERS' CONFERENCE**

ACCA's Learning Providers' conference is held once every two years in the UK. All Approved Learning Partners receive an invitation to the conference which contains full details on the programme and how to book places.

## **BENEFITS OF PLATINUM APPROVAL**

As a Platinum Approved Learning Partner, you are actively promoted by ACCA to students, our Approved Employers and other partners as a highest-quality tuition provider. In addition to the benefits available to Gold Approved Learning Partners, Platinum Approved Learning Partners receive the following benefits:

## **Market information package**

Platinum Approved Learning Partners are provided with ACCA market information packages, details of which are below:

- On 31 May and 30 November each year, ACCA will provide details of registered student numbers and numbers of students entered to sit ACCA examinations, analysed by examination centre for their country of operation. Market information is provided biannually for the sole use of the Platinum Approved Learning Partner and should be treated as confidential. Sharing of this information with any party not directly involved in the delivery of the Approved Learning Partner's approved courses may be grounds for temporary suspension of approval or for removal of the provider from the ALP programme.

## **ACCA Learning Providers' conference**

Platinum Approved Learning Partners benefit from priority booking at ACCA's Learning Providers' conference.

## **ACCA examination review board**

Platinum Approved Learning Partners are given the opportunity to comment on ACCA examinations by providing written representation at ACCA's Examination Review Board. ACCA will contact you shortly before each examination session and invite you to participate in this process. If you wish to, you will be sent Q&As throughout the examination session which can be distributed to tutors for their feedback.

ACCA is committed to the continual improvement of the support provided to Approved Learning Partners. To keep up to date on the latest enhancements, including new programme benefits, please visit [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)

# Becoming an Approved Learning Partner

To become an Approved Learning Partner you must be teaching at least one of ACCA's qualifications and be able to demonstrate your success.

The following table shows the minimum ACCA tuition provision that learning providers must offer in order to be eligible for each level of approval.

APPROVAL LEVEL	ACCA
Gold	Any of ACCA's qualifications – ACCA Qualification, Foundation Level qualifications (including CAT)
Platinum	Running a minimum of eight papers annually from the ACCA Qualification, which must include all Essentials papers and two Options papers in the Professional level

To qualify for Gold or Platinum approval, learning providers must offer full-time or part-time face-to-face tuition, or an equivalent distance-learning course. In reviewing a full-time/part-time course, ACCA will take into account:

- the style of tuition
- the duration of the course
- the timing of the course in relation to the exams.

Revision courses are considered in the approval process, but approval cannot be given on the revision course alone.

## PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

When applying for approval, learning providers are assessed against ACCA's performance targets, detailed in the performance assessment matrix.

Learning providers are given flexibility in how they demonstrate achievement of each target and are invited to relate targets to their institution and give insight into their individual practice. ACCA welcomes diversity and innovation in all areas of institution management and course delivery.

The performance targets are assessed in two parts: Part 1 – Institution management and Part 2 – ACCA course management and delivery.

Depending on the level of approval, the learning provider must be able to demonstrate that they meet all the performance targets as follows:

- Gold: performance targets 1.1–1.6 and 2.1–2.6 inclusive

ACCA encourages learning providers to provide a complete account of why they believe they meet each target, supported with relevant evidence or documentation. Guidance and examples of documentation/evidence that can be used to support the claim that a performance target has been met is contained within this pack.

# PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT MATRIX – GOLD LEVEL

## PART 1 – INSTITUTION MANAGEMENT

Assessment element	Gold
<b>Retention</b>	<p><b>1.1</b> Student retention figures are documented and reviewed, and the reason for student losses is investigated.</p>
<b>Terms and conditions</b>	<p><b>1.2</b> All students are issued with the institutions terms and conditions of enrolment, including refund and deferment policies.</p> <p>Students are asked to actively confirm that they have read the T&amp;Cs on enrolment.</p> <p>Approved Learning Partners are required to include the following line on the signing page of their enrolment form:  <b>Before signing this Enrolment Form, students are reminded to ensure that they have clearly understood all the terms of their enrolment with XXXXXXX (Learning Provider name), in particular clauses concerning refunds, deferments, waivers, course transfers and visa applications (when applicable).</b></p>
<b>Complaints procedure</b>	<p><b>1.3</b> A formal, transparent complaints procedure or charter is in place and available to students.</p> <p>Complaints received are investigated thoroughly and promptly, within specified timeframes.</p> <p>Complaints log is maintained.</p>
<b>Customer service</b>	<p><b>1.4</b> Learning providers demonstrate commitment to provide excellent customer service at all times.</p> <p>Clear guidance is provided to students on how to get in touch and engage with learning provider.</p> <p>Information relating to ACCA study, exams, PER, ethics, exemptions and <i>ACCA Connect</i> contact details are readily available.</p>
<b>Study environment</b>	<p><b>1.5</b> Study environment must be appropriate for mode of delivery, course type and be conducive to study.</p>
<b>Financial viability</b>	<p><b>1.6</b> Learning provider is financially viable.</p>

# PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

## PART 2 – ACCA COURSE MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

Assessment element	Gold
<b>Tutors</b>	<b>2.1(a)</b> Tutors are knowledgeable and experienced in their chosen field and hold qualifications appropriate to the subjects they teach.
	<b>2.1(b)</b> Tutor performance is monitored and development opportunities provided.
<b>Student feedback</b>	<b>2.2(a)</b> Student feedback on learning provider performance is actively sought, reviewed and acted upon where appropriate.
	<b>2.2(b)</b> Student feedback questionnaires should include questions on administration, study environment, tutor performance and course content and delivery.
<b>Teaching/study programme</b>	<b>2.3(a)</b> Students are provided with guidance on their programme of study, including a detailed breakdown of their course into modules or study sessions. There must be appropriate PER references relevant to various subject areas, as well as advice on homework and preparatory guidelines, timings of assignments, mock examinations and progress tests.
	<b>2.3(b)</b> References to ACCA study resources and guidance for students are visible and clearly promoted. The following links should be included in information communicated to students <a href="http://www.accaglobal.com/uk/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/study-revision/study-tips.html">http://www.accaglobal.com/uk/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/study-revision/study-tips.html</a> <a href="http://www.accaglobal.com/uk/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/qual-resource/acca-qualification.html">http://www.accaglobal.com/uk/en/student/acca-qual-student-journey/qual-resource/acca-qualification.html</a>
	<b>2.3(c)</b> Mock examinations and timed progress tests are set, reviewed and returned with constructive criticism around content and style within a specified turnaround time.
<b>Student support and advice</b>	<b>2.4(a)</b> Students are offered advice on study options as well as ACCA progression rules, exam entry, exemptions and ethics module.
	<b>2.4(b)</b> Staff are fully aware of the practical experience requirements (PER) for ACCA membership, signpost them to students and are able to provide students with support and guidance in achieving them.
<b>Course review</b>	<b>2.5</b> Regular review of course structure and delivery, student performance, retention and feedback is conducted and documented.
<b>Promotional materials</b>	<b>2.6(a)</b> Promotional material contains accurate information regarding ACCA (including information on exams, PER and ethics where appropriate) and up to date ACCA <i>Connect</i> contact details.
	<b>2.6(b)</b> Promotional materials contain accurate information regarding the learning provider and makes no unsubstantiated or potentially misleading claims.



# Application process and progression

## APPLYING FOR GOLD APPROVAL

Applications for Gold approval are invited from learning providers who have been teaching ACCA qualifications for at least one full session and who can demonstrate that they meet all the Gold performance targets.

## MAKING THE APPLICATION

Applications can be made online at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) where you will initially be asked to provide some details about your institution. ACCA will consider your eligibility to apply and upon confirmation will issue you with PDF versions of the application form and guidelines.

In your application, you will be asked to declare that to the best of your knowledge your institution meets each of the performance targets, and to detail the ways in which you are able to demonstrate this.

You will be required to submit with your application any documentation that can be used to demonstrate that each of these performance targets is met.

A non-refundable initial application fee of £50 is payable with the application.

## GOLD PRE-APPROVAL REVIEW AND VISIT

Once your application is complete and the fee has been received, a desk based pre-approval review will be carried out followed by a pre-approval visit arranged by an ACCA representative. Before the visit, you will receive an email from an ACCA representative, explaining what will happen at the visit, and what you should do to prepare for it.

## MULTI-SITE PROVIDERS AND SATELLITES

Approval on the programme applies to individual learning providers at single-site locations. Learning providers based at more than one site should seek separate approval for each location.

## REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

If you are based in a country that has a regulatory requirement for your institution to register with a government organisation (or similar), ACCA expect that you have complied with these requirements.

## IAAER GLOBAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR ACCOUNTING EDUCATORS

As an Approved Learning Partner, you will be expected to abide by the International Association for Accounting Education and Research (IAAER) Global Code of Ethics for Accounting Educators. The code of ethics is designed to guide accounting tuition providers by underlining their responsibilities in this field.

Visit the IAAER website at [www.iaaer.org](http://www.iaaer.org) to see the Code of Ethics in full.

## MOVING TO PLATINUM

Approved Learning Partners may not commence the process for Platinum approval before they have received confirmation from ACCA's accreditation team that they have met the Platinum pass rate targets for three consecutive examination sessions and are eligible to apply. This will normally happen within three weeks of the examination results release in February and August respectively.

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Approved Learning Partners who do not apply for Platinum approval before this deadline, and who fail to meet the Platinum pass rate targets in the

subsequent examination session, will no longer be eligible to apply for Platinum approval. Under these circumstances the Approved Learning Partner would be required to meet the Platinum pass rate targets for a further three consecutive examination sessions for eligibility to be regained.

Platinum approval will only be awarded when it has been demonstrated that the Approved Learning Partner meets all criteria for Platinum approval.

Gold Approved Learning Partners may not make reference to meeting the Platinum pass rate targets in any advertising or promotional materials prior to receiving confirmation of the award of Platinum status in writing from ACCA's accreditation team.

## PLATINUM PRE-APPROVAL VISIT

Once your eligibility for progression to Platinum has been established, an approval visit will be arranged with an ACCA representative. This may be combined with your annual Gold monitoring visit if it has not already been conducted in the year of the Platinum application.

# Approval

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The outcome of an application for Gold or Platinum approval will be confirmed to you in writing by the Accreditation team shortly after the pre-approval visit.

## APPROVAL FEES AND TIMING OF APPLICATIONS

Once your application is approved, you will be invoiced for the approval fee, which for Gold status is equivalent to the annual fee. Newly-approved Platinum Approved Learning Partners will be invoiced for the difference in fee.

There is no deadline for applications for Gold or Platinum status. However it is worth noting that the annual renewal processes take place in the last quarter of the approval period. Approval periods run from 1 April to 31 March of the following year. All existing Approved Learning Partners are invoiced for the following year's annual fee during this time. Applicants gaining approval late in the year may therefore incur two sets of fees in a short space of time.

## APPROVAL PACK AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

On approval, you will receive confirmation from the Accreditation team and, if applicable, this will also detail any conditions or recommendations upon which your approval is based.

A certificate declaring your Gold or Platinum approval will be enclosed with the confirmation letter. In addition, ACCA promotional materials will be issued to you directly from ACCA's mailing house.

You will be able to download the appropriate Approved Learning Partner logo by following the link to *myACCA* on the [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) home page and logging-in using your username and password.

## UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

ACCA reserves the right to decline approval to institutions that have submitted unsuitable applications. It is the responsibility of the institution to demonstrate that it has met all relevant performance targets in their application and at the pre-approval visit.

If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive confirmation from the Accreditation team, which will detail recommendations for improvement.

There is no appeals process, however learning providers are welcome to reapply when improvements have been implemented.

# ACCA's tuition provider directory

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ACCA's Tuition Provider directory includes all Approved Learning Partners who are each given a prominent extended entry within the directory, based on their level of approval.

In addition to Approved Learning Partners, the Tuition Provider Directory also includes learning providers who have not been formally approved by ACCA, but who are working towards achieving Gold status.

Only ACCA's Approved Learning Partners have been formally assessed by ACCA. Gold applicants listed on the Tuition Provider Directory does not signify approval from ACCA or guarantee the quality of tuition.

You can find further information on the ACCA Tuition Provider Directory at [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com) or by emailing ACCA's Existing Accreditations team [tuition@accaglobal.com](mailto:tuition@accaglobal.com) with your queries.

## Fees

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The following fees will apply per site:

### **GOLD**

£650 annual fee plus £50 initial application fee (non-refundable).

### **PLATINUM**

£750 annual fee.

Payment should be made in £ sterling to 'ACCA' and sent directly to the Accreditation team in Glasgow.



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ACCA  
Accreditation Team  
2 Central Quay 89 Hydepark Street  
Glasgow G3 8BW United Kingdom  
tel: +44 (0)141 534 4199  
[newaccreditations@accaglobal.com](mailto:newaccreditations@accaglobal.com)  
[www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com)