

Think Ahead

ACCA

ACCA in the public sector

Information
pack

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The public sector is changing. Our more sophisticated societies are demanding more services and better infrastructure. And organisations are increasingly being asked to comply with international standards. This comes at precisely the time we're seeing a shortage of high quality finance professionals in government and audit. And when many developing countries are uncertain about the best way to effectively manage public finances.

It's in this changing environment that we can help you work effectively and efficiently – and equip your teams with the skills they'll need to take your organisation into the future.

What's happening in your sector?

We regularly survey organisations, bodies, employers and employees from all over the world to gain in-depth insight into the public sector.

Right now, we know your finance teams are facing a number of challenges:

The impact of austerity

Public funds are under increasing pressure – so you're having to cut costs and become more efficient. Your finance teams are focusing on streamlining processes and making their organisations more resilient, both operationally and financially.

A growing demand for higher standards

The public wants full accountability – and transparent management and financial reporting. This means there's more work to do in terms of reporting, compliance and regulation – such as complying with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) or International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS®).

Becoming a business partner to the rest of the organisation

Greater demand on your finance teams mean CFOs are often responsible for procurement, IT and HR. They need to work with other departments to make sure everyone is following best practice. And they need to liaise regularly with stakeholders – such as government, private sector partners and suppliers and employees.

New technologies

Technology is opening up new opportunities in your sector. But before your teams can embrace it and use it to transform public services, they need to understand its full potential.

Why partner with ACCA?

In this fast-changing world, many public sector organisations look to us to keep their teams up-to-date and future ready. They recognise the power of our qualifications and support, both for now and in the future.

Throughout our 100+ year history we've worked extensively in the public sector. We've partnered with national accountancy bodies, development agencies, governments and regulators to strengthen the accountancy profession, set consistent global standards, promote responsible business and make the global economy more sustainable.

We set the highest standards and quality

You want the best, most dedicated finance professionals – and our qualifications and training are designed to produce them. We set the highest standards in the accountancy profession and our qualifications directly support your organisation's needs.

We create the best career opportunities

Our members get the best opportunities because they create opportunities for the organisations they work in. Which is why the cutting-edge support we give them throughout their careers is crucial. It gives them the skills and resources they need to add value to your organisation and remain invaluable business partners.

We create a better world

Your organisation is working to make the world a better place – and so are we. We work with public sector organisations across the globe to develop the accountants the world needs – accountants who will help to build better societies, economies and nations. We have 64,000 members and students working in the public sector worldwide.

We shape the future of the profession

Economies, sectors and infrastructure are developing more rapidly than ever before. Which means your finance teams need to have the skills and agility to keep your organisation efficient and relevant. Our qualifications and support are designed to help them anticipate and prepare for change.

The benefits of working with us

When you partner with the world's most forward thinking accountancy body, you keep your organisation at the leading edge.

If you decide to work with ACCA, you get:

Future-ready teams

You need the best and most dedicated finance professionals to help grow the global economy and create a better world. And as governments and public sector bodies become more connected and commercial, your accountants will need more than a traditional skill set to add value to your organisation. Yes, strong technical knowledge will still be crucial – but tomorrow's accountants will also need to be creative, excellent communicators and strong leaders. Our qualifications give your teams the skills they need to take your organisation into the future.

The highest quality training and qualifications

Keep your finance teams at the forefront of professional accountancy. Our qualifications and training give you everything you need to develop your teams – including upskilling individuals, understanding ethics, training in international accounting standards and improving complex audit processes.

We also offer consultancy services including policy work, regulation advice, capacity building, business modelling and framework development.

Robust technical expertise

We've worked with public sector bodies to draft legislation, constitution and bylaws – and we've advised on governance, staffing structures and strategic planning.

We work closely with our partners to grow their capacity and expertise – and with our regional partners on improving education standards and qualifications.

We're also experts in these areas of regulation and professional standards:

- Designing regulatory models
- Drafting legislation and regulations
- Advising on and designing quality assurance process, licensing, investigation and discipline

Cutting-edge insight

All of the advice and support you get from us is underpinned by our in-depth insight. We carry out regular research and surveys to make sure we stay ahead of developments in the public sector – and to help you provide what you will need in the future.

Unparalleled experience

We work with public sector organisations all over the world – training accountants and finance teams, building capacity, advising international, national and local bodies and helping governments tackle corruption.

Many of our members have held senior public sector roles worldwide, including:

- Sotiris Kyriacou – Head of Finance Development, NHS
- John Francis Semwezi Muwanga – Auditor General, Uganda
- Abubakr Abdulla Mari – Auditor General, Sudan
- Tunde Ahmed Abdulkareem – Accountant General, Nigeria

We work with standard setters like the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and we're active on key forums such as:

- The ASEAN Federation of Accountants (AFA)
- The Confederation of Asian and Pacific Accountants (CAPA)
- Fédération des Experts-comptables Européens – The European Federation of Accountants (FEE)
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of the Caribbean (ICAC)
- The Pan-African Federation of Accountants (PAFA)

We also played a crucial role in developing International Education Standards (IES).

Meeting your organisation's needs

All of this means we can support you with these specific challenges:

Robust financial reporting and management

Our qualifications give your teams the financial reporting and management skills they need – from creating frameworks to dealing with complex audits.

Regulation and governance

Through decades of advising governments and public sector organisations on policy and regulation, we've developed a globally-regarded approach to regulation and governance.

Reducing risk

Reduce risk with our frameworks on governance, professional and corporate ethics and eliminating corruption.

Improving efficiency

The ACCA approach – which is deeply embedded in our training and support – promotes best practice and transparency throughout your organisation.

Recruiting the right people

Identify and recruit the best people to your teams through ACCA Careers. Our job board and careers portal give you access to 250,000 monthly users, 20,000 CVs – with more added every month, and 25,000 job ads.

Many public sector organisations around the world use our job board to recruit talented finance professionals. Some of these include:

- UK Department for Transport
- UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- European Central Bank
- European Investment Bank
- UK's Ofgem
- UK's Ofqual
- UK Transport for London

You can also find students and aspiring finance professionals through our Accelerate programme. This is a partnership with leading universities that lets students combine their studies with ACCA registration – giving them an accelerated start to a career in professional finance.

Retaining the right people

Professional development is a crucial part of retaining the best people – and it's a huge part of being an ACCA member. Our members get opportunities for training and qualifications throughout their careers so they can continue to develop, progress and add value to your organisation.

Your organisation can also become an ACCA Approved Employer. This status recognises an organisation's high standards in training and development – and can help you to attract and retain talented ACCA members.

Embracing globalisation

Our reach means we're perfectly placed to advise you on global challenges. We also share best practice from different regions to keep your organisation at the leading edge.

Capacity building

ACCA has been fundamental in empowering nations across the world to build the foundations of healthy societies and economies.

How our qualifications and training could help your teams

Everyone in your organisation could benefit from ACCA training. Our world-leading qualifications cover a range of roles – from entry level to senior leaders – and span many sectors. And we regularly refresh and improve our qualifications to keep them future ready.

Here are some of the qualifications we offer that directly address your organisation's needs:

ACCA Qualification

Through the ACCA Qualification – the future, we develop professional accountants who thrive in today's fast-changing world. Accountants who immediately add value to your organisation.

Our flagship qualification has a strong focus on professional values, governance and ethics.

Through exams, work experience and a professional ethics module, your teams get the skills, knowledge and professional values they need to succeed in the public sector and drive your organisation forward.

Certificate in International Public Sector Accounting Standards (Cert IPSAS)

A robust knowledge of IPSAS® reporting is essential for certain public sector finance professionals.

This flexible, cost-effective online course gives your teams the reporting skills they need to improve the accountability and transparency of public finance.

Foundation level qualifications

This is a range of awards that gives your teams a foundation in accountancy and finance. There are no formal entry requirements, and you can choose from a number of qualifications:

- Certified Accounting Technician
- Introductory and Intermediate Certificate in Financial Management and Accounting
- Diploma in Accounting and Business
- Certificates in auditing, tax and financial management

Advanced Diploma in Public Financial Management (Adv Dip PFM)

This qualification helps you effectively and efficiently build financial capacity – and gives your teams budgeting, financial reporting and financial management skills.

It includes:

- Our Cert IPSAS qualification
- Our Professional Ethics module
- Six exams from the ACCA Qualification syllabus

ACCA-X

This is our online platform for flexible, affordable and high quality learning. Public sector teams can gain awards in financial management and accounting – and can then progress to our flagship ACCA Qualification.

There are many free modules so your organisation can benefit at no cost.

GBS Qualifications

To make the best use of resources, many public sector organisations use a shared services model. Our Global Business Services (GBS) Qualifications give your teams the training and understanding they need to work in one of the fastest-growing sectors in business. When they achieve the certificate, diploma and advanced diploma, they can move on to the ACCA Qualification.

As well as gaining professional qualifications, individuals can get academic awards through our university partnerships:

Oxford Brookes Applied Accounting BSc

This is a joint programme from ACCA and Oxford Brookes University that's designed for students taking the ACCA Qualification. To get this degree, students have to pass the first nine exams and the Professional Ethics module of the ACCA Qualification – and submit a research and analysis project.

University of London Professional Accountancy MSc

ACCA is the first accountancy body worldwide to offer an integrated master's programme. Alongside gaining their professional qualification, our students can study for a master's at the University of London – giving them unique opportunities for career progression.

Success stories

Our public sector partnerships have been vital in laying the foundations for a national, self-sustaining accountancy profession in countries across the world, including:

Botswana, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mauritius, Swaziland, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia.

Here are just a few examples of our work:

Partnering with the Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Rwanda

We worked closely with iCPAR throughout 2015, to give its accountancy organisations the knowledge and resources they needed to monitor and regulate members.

We supported iCPAR as it developed infrastructure and expertise needed to create a methodology for audit quality reviews. This involved monitoring Rwandan firms to establish a benchmark – and giving iCPAR teams the opportunity to shadow experienced audit quality review professionals.

Training teams at the Ministry of Education Ethiopia

We ran a train-the-trainer programme for ministry teams and public university lecturers in July 2014 to:

- Upskill lecturers
- Help teams move to IFRS
- Develop and improve the curriculum

Building capacity in Myanmar

In 2015, we collaborated with the Office of the Auditor General and the Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants (MICPA) to create a train-the-trainer workshop. The aim of the workshop was to increase knowledge and grow skills in and compliance with international accounting standards.

We ran a second programme with MICPA and the Office of the Auditor General on IFRS and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS®).

Cutting corruption in Nepal

By 2022, the government of Nepal wants it to become a developing country – so zero tolerance against corruption has become a top priority.

We worked with the government to boost ethics, integrity and accountability in every section of public life. We also ran public financial management courses to help teams give citizens excellent service and value for money.

Building capacity on a global scale

We're active in strengthening the accountancy profession around the world through twinning and mentoring partnerships and consultancy projects. Our development objectives support initiatives like:

- The World Bank Reports on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSCs)
- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) accounting development tool

Frequently asked questions

I always thought ACCA was a private sector body – do you have much experience in the public sector?

We have 64,000 members and students in the public sector around the world – making us the largest organisation for finance and accountancy professionals in your sector. We regularly survey organisations, bodies, employers and employees to gain in-depth insight into the public sector. Our recent research – 50 Drivers of Change in the Public Sector – focuses on what will change in your sector before 2026 – and the skills tomorrow's accountants will need to succeed.

We already work with our local body.

We usually work in collaboration with local bodies in the countries we're active in, so we can give you a wider perspective on standards and best practice. Our members and employers work around the world – so we can help you deal with challenges from both a local and global perspective.

Will partnering with ACCA save my organisation money?

Our qualifications and training directly support the needs of the public sector and give you some of the best finance professionals in the world. These professionals typically save money in their organisations by increasing efficiency and transparency. When you work with ACCA to produce a development programme, you're more likely to retain team members – saving money on recruitment and training.

Don't you only offer general accountancy qualifications?

Our flagship ACCA Qualification is designed to produce well-rounded accountancy professionals who add value to organisations in all sectors. As well as the world's leading accountancy qualification, we also have specific public sector courses – like our globally-regarded Cert IPSAS training and our Advanced Diploma in Public Financial Management.

What happens next?

If you'd like to find out more about partnering with us – or have any questions – please email ppqadmin@accaglobal.com

About ACCA

ACCA is the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and we're the world's most forward thinking professional accountancy body. We believe that accountancy is vital for economies to grow and prosper – which is why we work all over the world to build the profession and make society fairer and more transparent.

Founded in 1904, we now have more than 188,000 fully qualified members and 480,000 students worldwide. They're amongst the world's best-qualified and most highly sought-after accountants – and they work in every sector you can imagine.

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