

## Guide for promoting your *ACCA Quality Checked* award to local media.

### Your audience and their requirements

The regional press - like any news organisation - will judge a potential story on the basis of how many readers will be interested - the "so what?" factor.

What will the award of *ACCA Quality Checked* to your firm mean to the people of the town in which you are based - or the surrounding area?

The potential for publicising your success is good, provided you meet the criteria of the first audience you need to interest - the news or business editor - before you reach the thousands of potential customers reading the local press.

Larger regional newspapers will have business editors, who are always looking for good local stories. While they are bombarded with dozens of press releases each day, most of them end in the waste or recycling bin because they are seen to be boring and/or irrelevant.

In many cases, the reporter covering business may also be writing obituaries, covering football matches, council meetings and magistrates court cases and will not be an expert in accountancy.

### What do you need to do?

The regional media always reacts more positively to a story with a local angle. It is therefore more effective for firms being awarded *ACCA Quality Checked* to highlight their success - 'Local Firm Wins Coveted Award' - rather than 'Global Accountancy Body Gives Award To Local Firm'.

The first paragraph of any press release needs to explain the whole story concisely and, like the whole release, must be jargon-free. References to GAAP or IFRS should not appear.

Additional angles also help - "XXX, Chartered Certified Accountants, from Oxdown, have been awarded a mark of approval only a year after opening their office"

Or

" The largest/longest established accountancy practice in Midshire has achieved a coveted award at its first attempt."

However, you should bear in mind the requirements of the Rules of Professional Conduct on advertising. Promotion of your firm should not discredit services offered by others. So, while you should stress the good service you provide you should avoid claiming to be the best, only or first firm to be awarded *ACCA Quality Checked*.

You need to explain why the award is relevant - the 'bottom line' is that clients and potential clients can have greater confidence in you because of the stringent requirements you have met.

You may also wish to mention that the *ACCA Quality Checked* award shows that accountants are qualified and subject to stringent regulations, which involve regular visits from the regulation team. A lot of people are amazed that there is no legal protection of the term "accountant" and that anyone can set up as an accountant. This is an issue on which ACCA is campaigning and using the *ACCA Quality Checked* mark enables you to highlight this issue - and the benefits of using properly qualified accountants.

Your press release should be brief - about four paragraphs. It should include a quote from a senior partner who will be happy to speak to the media, along with contact details.

The press is always looking for local expert commentary on business and finance issues, and the announcement of *ACCA Quality Checked* may mean you appear in contacts books more regularly as a respected spokesperson on those issues.

Attached is a suggested framework for a media release for firms which have been awarded *ACCA Quality Checked*. Included is a quote from Peter Large, ACCA's Executive Director-Professional Standards, which you are welcome to use. ACCA can provide contact details for local newspapers if required. Please contact [Colin Davis](#), at the ACCA Communications team if you require further information.

## Press Release

<Date>

### BEST PRACTICE ADDS UP TO AN AWARD FOR <TOWN/CITY> ACCOUNTANTS

<Town, city> accountancy practice <name of practice> is celebrating the award of a prestigious *ACCA Quality Checked* by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), the professional body which regulates and monitors thousands of accountants worldwide.

In order to achieve the award - *ACCA Quality Checked* - <the practice> had to demonstrate 'best practice' in all aspects of its business, during a recent rigorous inspection by ACCA compliance officers.

Peter Large, Executive Director - Governance, said: " The award of *ACCA Quality Checked* is one way of assuring businesses and the public that they can have confidence in the services offered by accountancy firms. The standards we set are high and it is a major achievement for <the practice> to secure this award, which reflects well on the calibre of staff and the services it offers to its clients."

#### Comment from successful practice...

For further information, please contact

< Partner in practice - telephone number XXXXXXXXX >