

HEARING

DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS

REASONS FOR DECISION

In the matter of: Mr Aon Amjad

Heard on: Friday, 18 September 2026

Location: Remotely via Microsoft teams

Committee: Ms Avril O'Meara (Chair)
Ms Dinisa Kandasamy (Accountant)
Ms Caroline Robertson (Lay)

Legal Adviser: Mr David Marshall

Persons present

and capacity: Mr Leonard Wigg (Case Presenter on behalf of ACCA)
Mr Aon Amjad (Student)
Ms Aimee Murphy (Hearings Officer)

Summary: Removed from the student register

Costs: £0

1. The Committee heard an allegation of misconduct against Mr Amjad. Mr Wigg appeared for ACCA. Mr Amjad was present and represented himself.
2. The Committee had a main bundle of papers containing 318 pages and a service bundle of 20 pages.

ALLEGATION(S)/BRIEF BACKGROUND

3. Mr Amjad became a student of ACCA on 12 January 2022. A few days later, according to his written answers to ACCA given on 20 April 2025, he was taken on by a leading audit firm as an audit associate. That was on 17 January 2022. On 06 June 2024 he was summarily dismissed. The allegations made against him by his employer were essentially as set out by ACCA in this case.
4. Mr Amjad faced the following allegations:

Allegations

Mr Aon Amjad, a registered student of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants ("ACCA"):

- 1) *Between 10 July 2023 and 31 May 2024, Mr Amjad forged signatures of Person A and/or Person B on at least 2 Independent Auditor's Reports (the "Signed Audit Reports") and 11 Agreed-Upon Procedure ("AUP") Report on Statement of Sales (the "Signed Statement of Sales") (see Annex 1).*
- 2) *Between 14 May 2024 and 22 May 2024, Mr Amjad submitted 4 Financial Statements ("Four Financial Statements") to Company A's clients without the completion of the internal review process, contrary to R113.1(b) of Subsection 113 of the Fundamental Principle of Professional Competence and Due Care in ACCA's Code of Ethics and Conduct (see Annex 1).*
- 3) *Mr Amjad's conduct at allegation 1 above was:*
 - a) *Dishonest, in that he forged the signatures of Person A and/or Person B in the Signed Documents without the relevant permission or authority; or in the alternative:*
 - b) *Such conduct demonstrates a failure to act with integrity.*

- 4) *By reason of the conduct described in any or all of the matters set out at allegation 1, 2, and 3, Mr Amjad is:*
- a) *Guilty of misconduct pursuant to bye-law 8(a)(i); or in the alternative*
- b) *Liable to disciplinary action pursuant to bye-law 8(a)(iii).*
5. During the course of the hearing it became clear that Allegation 2 was denied by Mr Amjad in relation to two of the four financial statements referred to but admitted in relation to the other two. These were the first and third financial statements listed in Annex 1 (page 275 of the bundle). The Committee considered that the difference between two incidents and four incidents was not significant in relation to the case as a whole. It proposed an amendment. The parties did not object. The amended allegation read:
- 2) *Between 14 May 2024 and 22 May 2024, Mr Amjad submitted 4 at least 2 Financial Statements (~~"Four Financial Statements"~~) to Company A's clients without the completion of the internal review process, contrary to R113.1(b) of Subsection 113 of the Fundamental Principle of Professional Competence and Due Care in ACCA's Code of Ethics and Conduct (see Annex 1).*

Annex 1 was also amended to remove two of the firms that were no longer relevant to Allegation 2.

DECISION ON FACTS/ALLEGATION(S) AND REASONS

6. Mr Amjad admitted allegation 1 and the amended allegation 2 and **the Committee found allegations 1 and 2 (as amended) proved.**

ALLEGATION 3(a): DISHONESTY

7. Mr Amjad admittedly 'forged' signatures on 13 documents. This was not a

mistake but a deliberate action, although he did not do it for personal gain. The Committee had considerable sympathy for Mr Amjad whose conduct during the investigation and hearing had been exemplary. However it was quite satisfied that at the material time he knew that what he did was wrong and against Company A's procedures. The Committee was also satisfied that forging signatures in the manner he did was conduct which would be regarded as dishonest by ordinary, decent people. 'Dishonest' was a word which Mr Amjad had used himself. In his response to ACCA dated 20 April 2025 he said 'I'm ashamed and embarrassed of the dishonest act done by me'. He told the Committee that he could not understand why he acted as he did except that at the time he was young, immature, inexperienced and stressed by working for the first time in a professional role. **The Committee concluded that Mr Amjad's conduct as found in Allegation 1 was dishonest.** Allegation 3(b) was in the alternative and did not have to be considered.

ALLEGATION 4(a): MISCONDUCT

8. The Committee had no doubt that Mr Amjad's proven actions amounted to misconduct. In relation to Allegation 1 the documents on which he forged signatures included auditor's reports so it was vital that their authenticity could be relied on. The documents in Allegation 2 were financial statements which, again, others might rely on assuming they had been produced in accordance with Company A's standard procedures. Under Allegation 3, dishonesty was proved. Dishonesty is a very serious finding against an accountant, regardless of seniority. **The Committee found that Mr Amjad was guilty of misconduct in respect of the facts found proved.** Allegation 4(b) was in the alternative and did not have to be considered.

SANCTION(S) AND REASONS

9. The Committee considered what sanction, if any, to impose in the light of its findings, having regard to ACCA's Guidance for Disciplinary Sanctions. It first sought to assess the overall seriousness of the misconduct. This was a case of dishonesty in relation to audit documents. It was clearly at the upper end of

the scale of seriousness.

10. The Committee next sought to identify mitigating and aggravating factors.
11. As to mitigating factors, Mr Amjad had no previous disciplinary findings but that was of little significance as he was very recently registered. He had made full and frank admissions throughout and had cooperated fully and constructively with the investigation. He had been remorseful throughout and the Committee was satisfied that his remorse was genuine and deeply felt. He had a reasonably good level of insight. The Committee accepted that at the relevant time Mr Amjad was under significant pressure. This was his first job in a professional firm and he was quite unprepared for having to deal with demanding audit clients. It seemed that Company A was under-staffed at the time and he lacked the support he needed. He may have had to take on more responsibility than was appropriate for someone of his limited training and experience. Mr Amjad was unable to say what had motivated him to act in the way he did at the time, but he did not do it for personal gain and ACCA accepted this.
12. The main aggravating factor was the seriousness of his misconduct. To forge a signature on financial documents (including an audit report) and issue it would have been very serious if it had been done only once but in fact it was done multiple times.
13. The Committee had no doubt that the misconduct required a sanction. The Committee first considered the sanctions of admonishment and reprimand and the factors suggested in the Sanctions Guidance. It concluded that these sanctions would be wholly inadequate to mark the seriousness of Mr Amjad's actions.
14. The Committee next considered the sanction of severe reprimand. The Guidance says that this can be applied:

in situations where the conduct is of a serious nature but there are particular circumstances of the case or mitigation advanced which satisfy the Committee

that there is no continuing risk to the public, and there is evidence of the individual's understanding and appreciation of the conduct found proved.

15. While Mr Amjad had a significant amount of mitigation it was not the 'remarkably good' mitigation that can make a case of dishonesty suitable for a severe reprimand.
16. The next relevant sanction was removal from the student register. Section E2 of the Guidance states:

E2.1 Dishonesty, even when it does not result in direct harm and/or loss, ... undermines trust and confidence in the profession. The Committee should consider all possible sanctions and/or combinations of sanctions available to it in every case, nevertheless the courts have supported the approach to exclude members from their professions where there has been a lack of probity and honesty ...

E2.2 The public is entitled to expect a high degree of probity from a professional who has undertaken to abide by a code of ethics. The reputation of ACCA and the accountancy profession is built upon the public being able to rely on a member to do the right thing in difficult circumstances. It is a cornerstone of the public value which an accountant brings.

E2.3 The Committee should bear these factors in mind when considering whether any mitigation presented by the member is so remarkable or exceptional that it warrants anything other than exclusion from membership or removal from the student register.

17. The Committee concluded that no sanction less than removal would be adequate in this case. The Committee recognised that this may cause hardship to Mr Amjad, but the public interest outweighs his own interests in this case.
18. It did not find any reasons to extend the period before which Mr Amjad can apply to be restored to the student register. If he does so he will have to satisfy the Admissions and Licensing Committee that he has learnt the relevant

lessons, has taken steps to ensure that there will be no repetition, and is a fit and proper person to be registered with ACCA.

COSTS AND REASONS

19. Mr Wigg applied for costs totalling £9,740. The Committee was satisfied that the proceedings had been properly brought and that ACCA was entitled in principle to a contribution to its costs. The Committee considered that the figure for costs was appropriate, subject to a possible reduction for this hearing to be completed more quickly than estimated.
20. However, the Committee had to consider Mr Amjad's ability to pay such figure for costs as the Committee assessed. He had supplied a statement of means, given evidence to the Committee and answered questions. [PRIVATE]. Otherwise he had no income or savings. He was living rent free in a friend's flat. The Committee concluded that requiring Mr Amjad to pay any sum as a contribution to costs would be impossible to meet and would impose substantial hardship. It assessed his contribution at zero.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF ORDER

21. The Committee did not consider that there were any grounds for making the order take effect immediately, rather than at the usual time. The order will take effect at the end of the appeal period.

ORDER

22. The Committee ordered as follows:
 - (a) Mr Aon Amjad shall be removed from the student register. Any application for readmission (which may not be made for 12 months after this order takes effect) shall be referred to the Admissions and Licensing Committee.

- (b) There is no order for Mr Amjad to contribute to ACCA's costs.

Avril O'Meara
Chair
18 September 2026