



Think Ahead

Guide from

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Brexit impact on recognition of the ACCA Qualification for access to EEA-regulated roles

The details of Brexit are still uncertain and we want to reassure you that ACCA is working to manage the impact of Brexit on members who wish to gain access to regulated roles in European Economic Area (EEA) states. It is important to note that most accountancy roles are not regulated in the EEA, so only those members wishing to access regulated roles, such as statutory auditor, will need to check the requirements with the competent authority for the profession in the EEA state in which they wish to practise. If you are not intending to access EEA regulated roles, you do not need to familiarise yourself with the following information.

What EU recognition exists prior to Brexit?

ACCA members who are EEA nationals are currently advantaged through the EU single market and related EU Statutory Audit Directive and Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive (EU RPQ routes) for the movement of statutory auditors and other accountants in regulated roles. They are able to obtain access to the same regulated roles in the host EEA state with the minimum of barriers.

What is the impact of Brexit?

Brexit will potentially impact professionals who are UK nationals and wish to access regulated roles in EEA states. UK nationals will no longer be eligible for direct recognition routes available on the basis of the EU RPQ routes for the movement of

professionals. Qualifications from UK competent authorities will also be seen as 'third-country qualifications'. However, EEA competent authorities may continue to have other direct routes available for UK nationals, and ACCA may also have direct agreements or exemption agreements in place with the EEA competent authority.

Will the ACCA Qualification still be relevant to the EU?

Irrespective of the type of Brexit scenario, ACCA will continue to offer a professional accountancy qualification that meets EU audit and accountancy requirements and to work closely with our counterparts in the EEA.

What is the impact of a Brexit with a deal and transitional period?

Further to Brexit and prior to the end of the transitional period, ACCA professionals who are EEA and UK nationals will still be able to apply for access to EEA-regulated accountancy roles, including statutory auditor, through the existing EU RPQ routes for the movement of professionals. It is likely that ACCA members who applied successfully for recognition to an EEA-regulated accountancy role, including statutory auditor, will retain that recognition post-Brexit. However, any further applications for recognition, by ACCA members who are UK nationals, to another EEA state after the transition period will depend on the arrangements between the UK and the EEA at the time of application. After the end of the transitional period and with any new agreements reached between the UK and EU, ACCA members who wish access to EEA-regulated accountancy roles should check with the EEA competent authority for that profession to confirm access requirements. If national recognition is held by ACCA members who are EEA nationals in a home EEA member state, existing EU RPQ routes should ensure smooth access to the same regulated role in other EEA states.

ACCA members who hold a UK Practising Certificate with Audit Qualification (UK PCAQ) should note that the UK Financial Reporting Council (FRC) is the UK competent authority for the role of statutory auditor, and FRC will lead on any new reciprocal recognition arrangements with EEA competent authorities. All ACCA members, irrespective of their nationality, will still be able to apply to EEA regulators to be a third-country auditor as outlined in the EU Statutory Audit Directive.

What is the impact of a no-deal Brexit?

ACCA members who are UK nationals, who obtained recognition through the EU RPQ routes and/or being a UK statutory auditor, will possibly be at risk of losing their status within the EEA state, and should check with their national competent authority for guidance on their position following a no-deal Brexit. ACCA members who wish to access or retain access to EEA-regulated roles should check the requirements to access the regulated role with the relevant EEA competent authority.

What is ACCA doing to help with access to EEA-regulated roles?

We are working to encourage collaboration between EEA and UK regulators and professional bodies, to allow the continued recognition of professionals between the UK and EEA countries with the minimum of barriers if Brexit goes ahead. This could be through direct recognition agreements between EEA and UK regulators and/or professional bodies or through national regulations if relevant to recognition. The FRC is the UK competent authority for the role of statutory auditor and the FRC will lead on any new reciprocal recognition arrangements with EEA competent authorities.

What about EEA professionals wishing to access regulated roles in the UK?

The UK government has confirmed that the UK will continue with the current recognition arrangements for EEA nationals until December 2020 irrespective of the Brexit scenario. ACCA will support these arrangements in its role as a competent authority for the protected title of 'Chartered Certified Accountant' and its delegated role to provide a route to UK statutory auditor status for EEA statutory auditors through its EEA direct membership route.

Further details of the different scenarios for UK and EEA nationals in relation to movement of statutory auditors and UK statutory auditors who wish to access the role of statutory auditor in an EEA state can also refer to the information provided by the FRC at bit.ly/frc-stat-aud.

Will the ACCA Qualification still be benchmarked to the European Qualifications Framework?

The ACCA Qualification is benchmarked to Level 7 (Master's degree level) of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) based on its national framework recognition in the UK, Malta and Ireland. Our expectation is that the benchmark will remain valid, but ACCA will monitor activities for future framework alignment.

Who should I contact if I have a query?

ACCA members can contact recognition@accaglobal.com. In all Brexit scenarios, members should check with the relevant EEA competent authority to ensure that they are in compliance with national regulations and obtain guidance on their individual situations.

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