The ACCA Qualification gives you the ability to be successful in ANY sector ANYWHERE in the world.

Did you know that ACCA...

- Supports 154,000 members and 432,000 students in 170 countries
- Has 68% of members under 44 years old, keeping you in great company with our young and dynamic membership base
- Is truly global – 57% of ACCA members are outside of the UK and the Republic of Ireland (CIMA 26% / ICAEW 15% / ICAS 14% / CIPFA 3%)
- Is proud to continually have the highest percentage of female members: 44% compared to 25% in other professional bodies
- Is the only professional body to offer Option papers allowing you to steer your career in the direction you want
- Provides our members and students with 24/7/365 support via our ACCA Connect global customer service centre.

The ACCA Qualification is the right choice Because...

- It’s RELEVANT to each and every area of accountancy
- It gives OPPORTUNITIES to work in different roles and up to senior level
- It’s GLOBALLY recognised and supported by top employers
- It’s FLEXIBLE, you can study full time, part time and through distance learning.
EXEMPTIONS

Your previous qualifications may entitle you to exemptions from some of the ACCA exams. This means you will start your studies at the most appropriate level according to your knowledge and skills and, more importantly, avoid studying subjects that you already know.

You must send official proof of any relevant qualifications which are held, or are currently being studied for, with your registration, in order for us to assess your eligibility and confirm your entitlement to exemptions. For more information on exemptions visit www.accaglobal.com/exemptions

EXAMS

The ACCA exams are divided into two levels, Fundamentals and Professional. The Fundamentals level is divided into two modules, Knowledge and Skills.

The Professional level is divided into two modules: Essentials and Options. Both of the modules at Professional level have been set at the same ability level as a Masters degree. This level builds on the technical knowledge you will already have. It will also explore more advanced professional skills, techniques and values.

EXPERIENCE

All ACCA students need to complete three years’ relevant work experience.

ACCA performance objectives set out a clear guide of the activities you should do and what you should achieve in the workplace. You need to achieve 13 of the performance objectives, all nine listed as ‘Essentials’ and four of those listed as ‘Options’.

Any relevant work experience obtained prior to registering with ACCA can count towards your performance experience requirements (PER).

ETHICS

The Professional Ethics module underpins every aspect of the ACCA Qualification. The aim of the module is to introduce you to a range of challenging ethical ideas.

ACCA IN THE UK

Whether you are studying, or thinking about studying, the ACCA Qualification in the UK, this guide has all the information you need to help you plan your stay.

In this section you will find relevant information and advice on living, studying and working in the UK.

ACCA UK is one of ACCA’s largest national offices, with over 80 staff working with UK-based students and members, as well as a wide range of other stakeholders, including tuition providers and employers.

We currently have 90,000 students and 67,000 members in the UK. ACCA has statutory recognition and is the fastest growing professional accountancy body in the country.

We have a large network of learning providers who offer ACCA tuition through a variety of methods in locations all over the UK.

We are engaged in a number of initiatives to support students and members, as well as working closely with both businesses and the government. We offer a variety of events nationwide, and also operate ACCA offices in Wales and Scotland that work specifically with and for members and students in those areas.

The UK is a diverse, vibrant place to live, study and work and is rich in history and culture. You can have a fantastic experience whilst you are here, and we look forward to supporting you throughout your international ACCA career.
COMING TO THE UK

Every year, students from all over the world arrive in the UK to study ACCA. We want you to have a smooth transition and ensure that your learning experience will be a positive one.

This international student guide has been developed to support you as you begin your journey to qualify as a chartered certified accountant. You will find information on ACCA, our members and where we operate. You can also access information related to your personal development, such as skills updates, employment advice and articles relevant to the profession.

Watching the international student video will highlight a few things you need to do before you make arrangements to study in the UK, these include:

**STEP 1**
Registering with a gold or platinum approved learning provider (ALP)

**STEP 2**
Getting the correct visas by demonstrating a B2-level of English

**STEP 3**
Ensuring you have funding to come into the UK

**STEP 4**
Registering as a student with ACCA and obtaining the correct exemptions to pass onto your learning provider. This will ensure you study towards the right papers.

The information in this guide will help you through this process.

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE IN THE UK

CHOOSE A LICENSED LEARNING PROVIDER
Find and apply to a learning provider who is licensed for the course you want to study. Ensure that they are a Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) and that they are a gold or platinum approved learning provider (ALP). A list of licenced institutions can be found on the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

More information on ACCA tuition can be found on page 11.

VISA REQUIREMENTS
Research visa requirements and ensure you have the necessary visas to enter the UK. To see what you need to do and learn about application options for your country visit the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

New rules for Tier 4 (the student tier of the points based system for UK) student visas came into force in April 2011.

UK visa requirements are subject to change and it is important that you familiarise yourself with the Tier 4 General Student visa requirement rules before travelling to the UK to study. You will need to know whether you require a UK student visa and, if so, how to apply for one.

ACCA UK is not involved in any aspect of administering or issuing student visas. This process is managed by the Home Office Border & Immigration Agency. For further information and guidance on UK student visa requirements and application procedures please visit the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

The Home Office UK Boarder Agency have produced a useful video about studying in the UK called ‘Guide to UK student visa’
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITY
You must be able to demonstrate that you can speak English required to level B2 (speaking, listening, reading and writing) if interviewed by a Home Office Agency officer. Some students must have passed the Secure English Language Test (SELT) before they apply for a student visa. Students may be refused a visa or entry to the UK if they cannot speak English without assistance.

We recommend our English and maths self-check modules which are free of charge and will provide you with feedback on your levels of ability in English and maths.

ACCA’s English and maths self-check modules

If you do need to improve your English language ability, you may want to consider studying the International Certificate in Financial English (Cambridge ICFE) which is endorsed by ACCA.

CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE FOR STUDIES (CAS)
Once you have made a final decision on where you would like to study, you need to ask the licensed learning provider of your choice to provide you with an electronic reference number, known as your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). For more information visit the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

FUNDING
Ensure that you have arranged maintenance funds and living expenses. For more information visit the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

REGISTERING WITH ACCA
If you are not yet an ACCA student, ensure you register with us directly. Your tuition provider can’t do this for you. By registering as a student with ACCA you will be able to obtain the correct exemptions to pass onto your learning provider and start studying towards the right papers.

To register as an ACCA student visit www.accaglobal.com/apply-now

CHECKLIST
Below is a list of important points to remember prior to studying in the UK:

✓ You must have sufficient maintenance funds

✓ The learning provider you are considering for your ACCA study must be a Gold or Platinum ALP licensed by the Home Office Agency to sponsor you for the course you want to study. The tuition provider must be a Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) in order to issue you with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). Visit the Home Office UK Border Agency website for further details

✓ To apply for a UK student visa, you must have the visa fee, a valid passport which meets the British immigration requirements, a CAS from the licensed learning provider, proof of maintenance funds, and a completed visa application form

✓ You must have evidence of appropriate qualifications taught by the licensed learning provider to accept you onto the course

✓ Once you receive your CAS from your tuition provider, you should request an interview for application for a UK student visa with the local British Embassy or British High Commission

✓ You will be required to demonstrate that you have sufficient command of the English language to B2 level
You will need to visit a visa application centre – to find out the location of your nearest visa centre visit the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

You will receive an acceptance pack from your learning provider. The pack should contain relevant information about tuition fees and entering the UK on a UK student visa.

You will need to arrange accommodation. The authorities may not grant you a UK student visa without written confirmation of proof of address whilst you are studying in the UK.

Make your arrangements for travel to the UK. You must ensure that you have your learning provider’s acceptance letter (CAS) with you. UK immigration may require confirmation of this when you arrive in the UK.

Once you move to the UK, remember to update your address details through myACCA, that way, we can automatically notify you of UK-related events, publications and initiatives.

REMEMBER: if you provide false documents, lie or withhold information, you may be refused a visa and could be banned from coming to the UK for up to 10 years.

If you are planning to study towards the ACCA Qualification in the UK then you must:
• Enrol with a learning provider who is licensed by the UK Border Agency with Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status
• Make sure this learning provider is accredited with ACCA under the Approved Learning Partner (ALP) programme with Platinum or Gold approval
• Obtain the correct visas.

UK LEARNING PROVIDERS
It is important that you make the right decisions when preparing to study. ACCA courses are taught by over 280 learning providers throughout the UK, so it can be difficult to select the one that is right for you.

ACCA strongly recommends that you opt for a provider that is registered under ACCA’s Approved Learning Partners (ALP) scheme, as you can be sure that they:
• Are monitored by ACCA
• Meet the minimum quality criteria
• Receive up-to-date information regarding ACCA
• Will be subject to an investigation in the event of any student complaints.

Gold Approved Learning Partners demonstrate to ACCA that they meet certain performance targets around the way they manage their institution – such as the provision of comfortable premises and adequate facilities, carefully monitored attendance and retention, and relevant courses.

ACCA UK is not involved in any aspect of administering or issuing student visas. This is managed by the Home Office Agency. For further information and guidance on UK student visa requirements and application procedures please visit www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/
These learning providers have a knowledgeable and experienced teaching team, a structured teaching programme and provide students with advice on study options and tutorial support. Platinum Approved Learning Partners, in addition to meeting the Gold performance targets, provide evidence of continual improvement and innovation, and must consistently meet exam result targets, set by meeting or exceeding ACCA’s worldwide pass rates.

ACCA APPROVED LEARNING PROVIDERS
You can access an up-to-date list of UK Learning Providers on the Home Office UK Border Agency website.

VARIANT PAPERS (LAW AND TAX)
ACCA is an international professional body, so we offer students the opportunity to take the law and tax papers that reflect these systems in several countries. However, if you are studying ACCA papers for law or tax in the UK, it is highly unlikely that UK learning providers will offer courses for these papers in anything other than the UK variant. While it is permissible to sit any available law or tax variant exam in the UK, you will need to consider how you would study for a non-UK law or tax variant paper in the UK.

COMPUTER-BASED EXAMS (CBEs)
Computer-based exams (CBEs) are available for some papers. CBEs offer flexibility, can be sat at any time and do not restrict you to the June and December sittings. However, you will not be able to sit CBEs unless you are a registered student with ACCA. Find full details on CBEs on our website.

EXAM CENTRES
ACCA conducts paper examinations at over 40 exam centres throughout the UK. Most major UK cities will have at least one exam centre. For details on the location of our exam centres visit the website.

FEES AND DATES
Costs for tuition vary depending on the individual learning provider. Payment for tuition takes place directly between you and your learning provider. ACCA only controls costs and payment for sitting exams.

ACCA’s fees and important dates

Upon completion of ACCA studies in the UK, international students return to their home country to obtain the relevant work experience for ACCA membership.

ACCA does not place students into jobs or arrange work permits. It is your responsibility to gain appropriate work experience.

The Home Office Border & Immigration Agency website provides clear information about the various routes open to non-UK nationals who want to work in the UK.

STUDENT PERMISSION TO WORK
For students sponsored by and studying directly with public higher education institutions, the current levels of permission to work are:
• 20 hours per week part-time during term-time for students undertaking courses at degree level or above
• 10 hours per week part-time during term time for students undertaking courses below degree level
• All students studying directly with higher education institutions will be able to work full-time during vacations.

Arriving and settling in a foreign country can be challenging and it may take you time to adapt to your new environment. Several organisations are available to provide help and support, such as Education UK, part of the British Council, who have produced a comprehensive guide to arriving and living in the UK. It includes information on arranging visas, accommodation, financial and legal matters, culture, food and health care. View the guide now.
ACCA CAREERS
ACCA Careers is a careers portal for members, students and graduates interested in the ACCA Qualification.

On ACCA Careers you will be able to upload your CV, access thousands of global job opportunities and find comprehensive guidance on a career in accountancy and finance. Visit the portal now.

STUDENT SUPPORT
ACCA UK is one of ACCA’s largest national offices, operating from offices in London, York and Birmingham. We have separate national offices for Wales and Scotland – ACCA Wales is based in Cardiff and ACCA Scotland is based in Glasgow. ACCA Ireland, meanwhile, supports students in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

UK PUBLICATIONS AND WEBSITES
The ACCA website contains information relevant to ACCA members and students studying in the UK. It contains information from all ACCA UK departments and advises on the latest UK events, research, resources and hot topics.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND EVENTS
In addition to global resources such as the student accountant magazine and resources found on the student section of ACCA’s website, we provide a number of UK-specific services including:

- List of exam support events taking place from the end of February to the end of April for students sitting exams in June and from the end of September to the end of October for students sitting exams in December. All the events are available from Approved Learning Partners on topics such as study skills, memory and exam techniques and can be specific to certain ACCA papers and subject areas. We also provide details of revision courses run by Approved Learning Partners for each exam sitting.

- Help for students progressing towards their Professional Experience Requirements (PER), as well as information on how to record your experience. My Experience will allow you to update your employment and experience easily and quickly, as you go along. Access My Experience through myACCA.

- A UK-specific e-bulletin is published at key points in the student year.

- A close partnership with NUS (National Union of Students) so that ACCA students can apply for the NUS extra card, which gives cardholders access to products and services from a variety of companies. NUS represents over seven million students across the UK, providing excellent benefits and helpful research and information. The NUS website offers students a range of facilities, including information on NUS campaigns, education news, and advice on issues relating to housing, education and health care.

- ACCA UK has developed a series of podcasts which focus on commercial awareness and how it can be translated across different sectors. The podcasts develop students’ commercial knowledge and demonstrate how to use that knowledge when applying for a job. Download the commercial awareness podcasts.

- Up to 69% off a subscription to The Financial Times newspaper and FT.com. Both are useful resources for ACCA students, providing broad based, in-depth knowledge of business and industry. To subscribe, email subscriptions@ft.com, visit www.ft.com/home/uk or call +44(0)845 602 3176 and quote ‘education association’.

KEEP IN CONTACT
If you move to the UK, remember to update your address details through myACCA which can be accessed from the home page of our website. That way, we can automatically notify you of UK-related events, publications and initiatives.
Whatever stage you are at in your career planning, ACCA can help. We have a range of qualifications, relevant to all business sectors, to help you reach your career goals. For more information about a career in finance and accountancy visit the ACCA website.

### WHAT WORK COULD I DO WITH THE ACCA QUALIFICATION?
Depending on whether you complete the foundation level qualification or ACCA Qualification, a range of opportunities are available to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - junior accounts clerk/junior bookkeeper role in an SME 
  - a range of junior accounting administration roles within an accounting department of a larger organisation or financial shared service centre. |
| Intermediate Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting |  
  - a bookkeeping or cost clerk role in a small to medium size organisation 
  - a range of accounting administration roles within an accounting department of a larger organisation or financial shared service centre. |
| Diploma in Accounting and Business |  
  - basic bookkeeping 
  - trainee accountant in a commercial organisation or accounting practice 
  - accounts clerk in public sector. |
| Advanced Diploma in Accounting and Business |  
  - a wide ranging and responsible accounting role in a small to medium size organisation 
  - a financial reporting and/or financial decision-support role, possibly in a supervisory role, within an accounting department of a larger organisation 
  - a financial supervisory or management role in accounts payables/ and or receivables, or a financial role in fixed asset accounting or in financial shared service centres 
  - an accounting technician role in a commercial organisation. |

### CAREER PROSPECTS

### EMPLOYABILITY AND CAREERS GUIDANCE

If you live outside the UK you should ensure that you are entitled to work in the UK before you enquire about jobs.

**ACCOUNTANCY MARKET SECTORS**
A career in accountancy offers a wide variety of choice in terms of both job roles and sectors. The main sectors and job roles are described in more detail below:

**FOUR MAIN SECTORS**

1. **CORPORATE SECTOR**
2. **BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES**
3. **PRIVATE PRACTICE**
4. **PUBLIC AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR**
**1 CORPORATE SECTOR**

The corporate sector gives trainee and qualified accountants a varied career with excellent career prospects. Many of the larger international companies also have opportunities for working abroad as part of the training.

Depending on the size of the company, you will typically be working as part of a team in the accountancy department. You may be involved in:

- financial accounting
- management accounting
- budgeting
- corporate planning
- treasury
- internal audit

You would join the Corporate Sector at an entry level role, such as an Accounts Assistant, which would give you valuable work experience whilst you study towards the ACCA Qualification. Accounts Assistants help with general accounting duties, such as maintaining the sales and purchase ledger, balance sheet reconciliations, tracking invoices, and purchase order maintenance.

Once you are part or fully qualified, you can join a company as a trainee Accountant. Many employers offer comprehensive programmes for trainees, which give you the support to progress in your career.

**2 BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES**

The Financial Services Sector is extremely competitive and offers a diverse range of opportunities. The recent recession has led to an increase in specialist roles such as Risk and Compliance.

Areas of employment within the Financial Services sector include:

- Retail Banks/Building Societies – mortgages, pensions, loans, insurance, shares and money transfers
- Investment Banking – corporate finance including mergers, acquisitions, bonds, equities, fund Management and derivatives
- Insurance/Re-Insurance – financial protection against risk
- Financial Advisors – providing plans for people’s financial future
- Brokers – buying and selling stocks and shares

- Compliance – ensuring an organisation meets industry standards parameters eg IFRS and Sarbanes-Oxley
- Unit Trusts – companies using portfolio management and other techniques to earn money for their investors

The banking and finance sectors offer some of the highest basic salaries coupled with potentially very high bonuses. However, this is also matched with long working hours and pressurised work loads. High vulnerability to market conditions can make job security in this area low.

In this sector, a genuine interest in business and the financial world is crucial, so you will need to monitor business reports, read the Financial Times and know how the FTSE index is performing.

**3 PRIVATE PRACTICE**

This sector is also referred to as public practice. Accountants working in this sector work for accounting firms focused on audit. In this sector, you will visit clients and review their business operation and financial accounts to ensure their company accounts are accurate. Services offered include advisory, audit and assurance, tax services and forensic accounting.

The experience you will gain in this sector will differ according to the size of the company. These can range from large international firms where you will specialise in areas such as audit and advisory, tax or corporate finance, to smaller firms where you may be involved in a wider role.

This sector is dominated by the ‘Big 4’ accountancy firms who audit the majority of the top 100 PLCs:

- KPMG
- Deloitte
- PwC
- Ernst & Young.

Competition to enter the ‘Big 4’ is fierce, but working for one provides an excellent grounding in your career.

There are other well-established firms beyond the Big 4, including Grant Thornton and Baker Tilly.

**4 PUBLIC AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR**

Career opportunities in this sector include local and national government, health, education, housing and charities.

In this sector, you will provide guidance on tax, raising funds, financial problems, management consultancy and financial ICT systems.

Working with budgets set by the government, you will be looking at how to best allocate and monitor resources to achieve the most cost efficient result.
EXAMPLE OF JOBS AND PRIMARY ACCOUNTABILITIES

ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT
- Maintaining the sales and purchase ledger
- Balance sheet reconciliations
- Tracking invoices
- Invoice and statement generation
- Assist credit controller with invoice queries and debt management
- Petty cash expense analysis
- Update actual and forecast data in reports
- Maintain purchase orders
- Process payments – BACS/CHAPS, cheques, credit cards

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTANT
- Preparation of the interim and year end financial statements
- Assisting with IFRS reporting
- Responsible for all balance sheet reconciliations
- Assist management with month end and year end processes
- Preparation of VAT returns
- Responsible for accurate information to government agencies such as the HMRC and ONS
- Liasing with auditors

FINANCE MANAGER
- Manage the Finance team’s day-to-day operations
- Lead and deliver all routine financial and management accounting
- Responsible for annual and quarterly statutory accounting (also known as stat accounts)
- Review trends/variances of sales for planning, budgeting and forecasting
- Monitor and improve financial systems
- Provide commercial support to management team and other departments

FINANCE DIRECTOR
- Oversee the finances of a company
- Effective management of finance resources
- Responsible for minimising costs and improving margins across the business
- Ensure tight controls are in place and accounting principles adhered to
- Lead the development of strategic financial planning and business plans
- Financial reporting to higher management and board

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT
- Responsible for business and financial analysis to support the management team with operational and strategic decision making
- Prepare month end reports and commentary
- Profitability report to members of management team
- Analysis on cost base and investigate any variances
- Assist in preparation of annual budgets and cash flow forecasts

FINANCIAL ANALYST
- Prepare monthly financial analysis and commentary
- Monthly forecasting updates
- Present finance information to other departments
- Produce analysis on cost forecasts and variances
- Assist with annual, quarterly and monthly budgeting
- Assist with P&L forecasting

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER (FC)
- Supervise the quality of accounting and financial reporting in a company
- Oversee and monitor accounting and internal controls
- Prepare financial statements, budget reports, forecasts, cost analysis reports, profit or loss statements
- Report under IFRS within all EU countries
- Ensure all aspects of the company’s finances are properly documented
- Make recommendations for future changes and challenges

This section has been produced by GAAP web, the UK’s leading jobsite for accountancy and finance professionals. We would like to thank them for their support.

www.gaapweb.com
STAY IN TOUCH

SOCIAL NETWORKS
Online networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook are great resources to use to find jobs. Groups and forums can provide useful access to accountancy and finance information and jobs that may not have been advertised in newspapers, trade journals or through recruitment consultants.

Our own social networks are a great place to start – join thousands of fans on our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter for all the latest news from ACCA UK.

ACCA CONNECT
We provide a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year global customer services centre. You can contact ACCA Connect by phone or email, and a dedicated member of the team will be on hand to answer your queries.

students@accaglobal.com
+44 (0)141 582 2000

FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION AND WEBSITES

ACCA Careers
www.accacareers.com

ACCA Computer-based exams (CBEs)

ACCA English and maths self-check modules

ACCA Exam centres

ACCA Learning Provider database
www.accaglobal.com/en/student/learningproviders

ACCA Potential – a free electronic newsletter for prospective students that provides information and advice about a career in finance and accountancy.

ACCA support services
www.accaglobal.com/en/student/support_information
www.accaglobal.com/en/student/commercial

ACCA UK
www.accaglobal.com

UK Border Agency Licensed Learning Providers
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employees/points/sponsoringmigrants/registerofsponsors/

UK Border Agency video
www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRX5dsbUC HAfeature=player_profilepage

UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)
www.ukcisa.org.uk

UK Home Office Agency
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/

Visit Britain
www.visitbritain.com

LEAVING THE UK

BEFORE YOU LEAVE
• Get contact details and references from your learning provider, or introductions to others in your destination country – contacts can often create opportunities for you
• Research the best way of using your UK experience to your advantage in your destination country (e.g. language skills, qualification and contacts).

WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN YOUR DESTINATION COUNTRY
• Notify ACCA of your change of address via ACCA Connect or myACCA
• Contact your local ACCA office to ensure you are up to date with all local ACCA information and services.

Good luck

Follow us on Twitter
@ACCAUK_OnCampus

Like us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/ACCA.Official