



Careers information sheet

Accounting

What do Accountants do?

Every major business decision involves understanding 'the bottom line'. Accounting involves recording business transactions to generate financial information for effective financial control and planning.

Accountants work in all areas of industry and commerce, in the public sector and in private practice. Some specialise in areas such as tax, audit or insolvency. Forensic accountants analyse and interpret complex financial and business related evidence and often assist in court cases as expert witnesses.

UK professional qualifications are recognised world wide and may open up opportunities to travel. Most accountancy trainees are graduates but it is possible to start at a technician level and progress through taking professional accountancy qualifications and work-based training.

Source: jobs4u/ICAEW/Edexcel

There are several different pathways to become a qualified Accountant.

- ROUTE 1 - Work based learning via Accounting Technician
- ROUTE 2 - Vocational learning
- ROUTE 3 - Graduate entry

Go to the Key Routes web pages for interactive versions of these – <http://www.keyroutes.org.uk/careas/business/opt-accounting.aspx>

Adults without formal qualifications can move into accounting. The industry welcomes mature entrants with experience, good people skills and business sense.

What else should I be doing?

It would help your Accounting career to:

- look for work experience or a holiday job in an accountant's office
- work on your communication and negotiation skills
- practise your keyboard skills
- become familiar with all the basic software such as Word and Excel and perhaps an accounting package
- develop your commercial awareness
- practise problem solving
- get yourself elected as Treasurer of a local club or society

Useful links

Awarding bodies offering accredited qualifications in Accounting include:

Edexcel

<http://www.edexcel.org.uk>

OCR

<http://www.ocr.org.uk>

EDI

<http://www.ediplc.com> and www.lcci.org.uk

City & Guilds

<http://www.cityandguilds.co.uk>

AAT

<http://www.aat.org.uk>

ACCA

<http://www.acca.co.uk>

IAB

<http://www.iab.org.uk>

The following organisations provide career information and accredited professional qualifications:

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)

<http://www.cipfa.org.uk>

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

<http://www.icaew.co.uk>

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)

<http://www.cimaglobal.com>

Institute of Financial Accountants

<http://www.ifa.org.uk> (non chartered accountants)