



Go places.

Become an ICAEW Chartered Accountant.

A career in chartered accountancy offers far more than you'd imagine. It's a passport to opportunity across a vast range of workplaces around the world.

From the most renowned professional services firms, to entrepreneurial start-ups, charities and government bodies, there's no end to where it can take you.

We've taken the most commonly asked questions by university students, and answered them for you.

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01 Who are we and what do we do?



We're ICAEW - a world leading professional body. It's our job to provide qualifications and professional development, share knowledge, insight and technical expertise for accountants and other business professionals.

We're also here to protect the quality and integrity of the accountancy and finance profession. Our standards are high, meaning ICAEW Chartered Accountants are always in demand.

WHY CHOOSE A PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION?

A professional qualification can enhance your career prospects. Our globally recognised chartered accountancy qualification, the ACA, provides a strong foundation for leadership.

Employers value the high level of knowledge, skills and expertise that ICAEW Chartered Accountants bring to their organisations. That's why you'll find our members at senior levels in organisations of all sizes and all types all around the world.

WHY CHOOSE ICAEW?

You'll become part of our global network of over 147,000 members and over 25,000 students. Our involvement doesn't stop once you've qualified - we'll support you throughout your career by providing further development and training.

As an ICAEW Chartered Accountant, you can unlock your career aspirations, with the support of a world leading professional body behind you.



WHAT DO ICAEW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS DO?



INNOVATE - by driving business strategy and developing future plans.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE - using expertise to help charities and businesses make the best decisions.



SOLVE PROBLEMS - by unravelling the complexities of a company's current situation.



INVESTIGATE - using their skills to explore business dealings for legal proceedings.



CREATE - finding new ways for businesses to work more effectively.



COMMUNICATE - explaining complex business and financial information to people at all levels of an organisation.

02

How is chartered accountancy more than you'd imagine?

MORE MEANINGFUL

Chartered accountants experience hugely rewarding careers. They give businesses confidence in their decisions, and they're trusted with everything from managing the funding of cutting-edge technology products, to guiding the financial development of international charities. Their work has a real impact on the world and its future, and it's their decisions that drive positivity and innovation across businesses.

MORE PRESTIGIOUS

Being 'chartered' sets you apart from your peers: it demonstrates your dedication, ambition and willingness to learn. It shows that you have industry skills and practical experience - not just theoretical knowledge.

The ACA qualification is constantly evolving to meet business needs. This, combined with its prestige and heritage, means that you have a qualification that is highly respected, regardless of what sector you want to work in.



ACA students, EY

MORE OPPORTUNITIES

Go into chartered accountancy and you won't find a shortage of opportunities. The accounting and professional services sector has more graduate vacancies available than any other. If you think about it, what organisation wouldn't benefit from having someone who can keep it successful.

Source: High Fliers: The Graduate Market in 2017



ICAEW Chartered Accountant, Depop

MORE POSSIBILITIES

As a chartered accountant, your skills will always be in demand. You won't be limited in any way - you could run a sports team, a charity, a film company, or even an international relief effort.

The possibilities are endless.

MORE PROSPECTS

Many of the senior roles in business are available to those with chartered status. What's more, chartered accountancy is widely recognised as a strong foundation for leadership. Almost one in four CEOs in the FTSE 100 are qualified chartered accountants.

Source: Robert Half FTSE 100 CEO Tracker - 2016

MORE GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

With 147,000 members across 154 countries, becoming an ICAEW Chartered Accountant will give you the opportunity to go places. Just take a look at the stories of the ACA students and chartered accountants in this brochure, who've worked everywhere from Mali to Cameroon, New York to India.

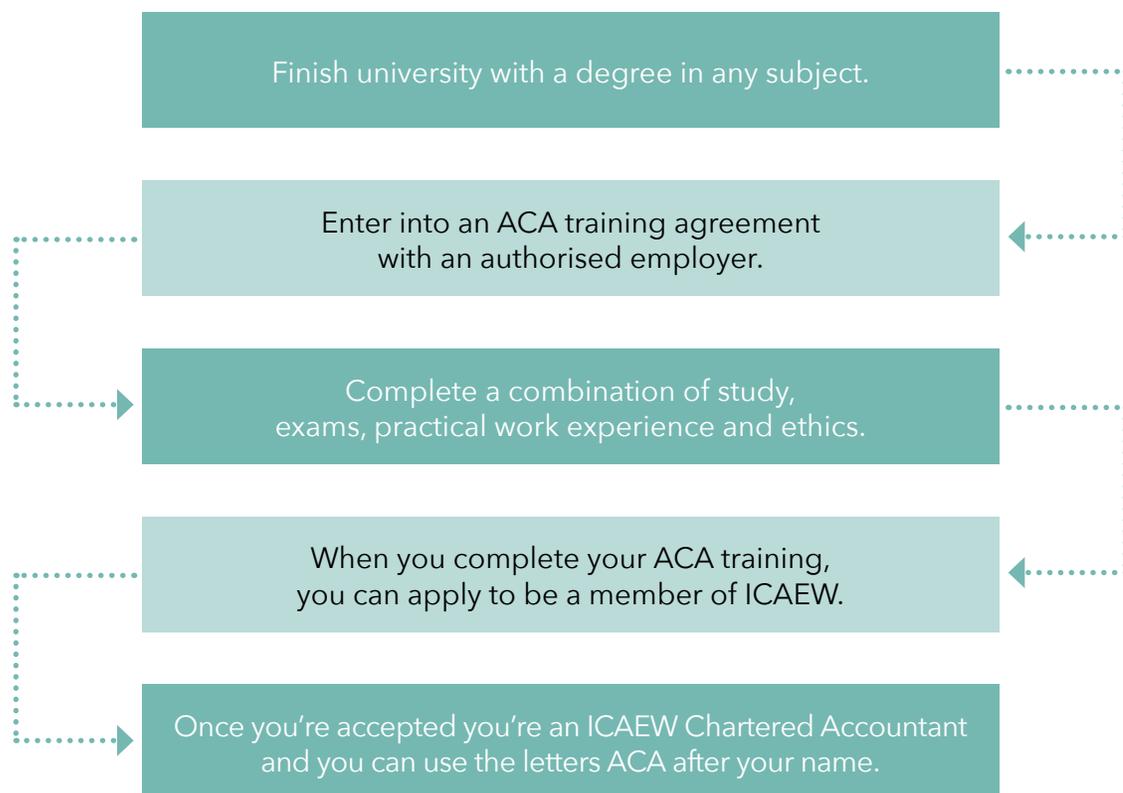
03

What do you need to know?

At ICAEW, we offer the ACA qualification, which is highly respected in the business world. Other accountancy bodies will award different letters and titles, but to use the letters ACA after your name you must complete an ACA training agreement.



BECOMING CHARTERED - THE PROCESS



AREN'T ALL ACCOUNTANCY QUALIFICATIONS THE SAME?

No. The qualifications offered by accountancy bodies differ both in terms of their content and career focus. Likewise, the level of support you'll receive during training varies between accountancy bodies. At ICAEW, we pride ourselves on providing a high level of support (and not just during your training, but throughout your entire career as a qualified chartered accountant). What's more, the evidence shows that the ACA is an excellent qualification for business leadership.

HOW TO APPLY

Many employers offer ACA training agreements as part of their graduate scheme. You can train for the ACA with a degree in any discipline. It is also possible to start the ACA on your own as an independent student. However, you'll still need to secure a training agreement to acquire the necessary practical work experience.

FINDING AN EMPLOYER TO TRAIN WITH

Accountancy firms are one way to train for the ACA. But you can also train in large companies, small enterprises, charities, government bodies ... the list goes on. There are c5,000 employers globally who you can train for the ACA qualification with.

WHAT IF MY CHOSEN EMPLOYER ISN'T AUTHORISED?

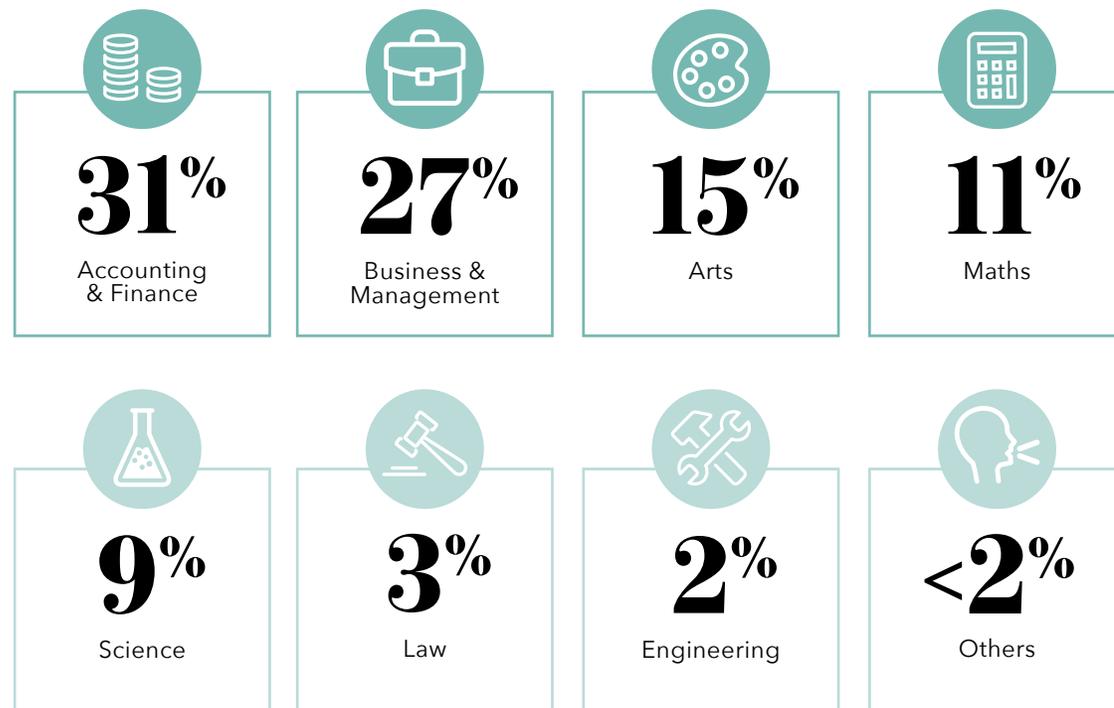
If a particular employer doesn't offer the ACA, it's worth mentioning your desire to train for the qualification. Provided the employer can meet our training standards, the process for them to become authorised to train you is simple, free of charge and can take as little as three weeks.

To view current vacancies please visit icaewtrainingvacancies.com.

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Who can do ICAEW's ACA qualification?

It might surprise you to learn that you don't need a degree in accounting, finance or business to study for the ACA. This diagram shows a breakdown of what current ACA students have studied - most are from a non-accountancy background.



ICAEW 2015 ACA student registrations who hold university degrees

'I've always had a passion for languages and for travel. I felt that with my strong languages background, adding a finance dimension would enable me to become a well-rounded business leader.'

Why did I choose the ACA?

'The credibility I have both because of my professional qualification, and the perspective I'm able to bring means my opinion is sought on a wide variety of business issues, not just typical 'finance' ones. As your career develops, there can be a big strategic, leadership element. In fact, many CEOs and board members are chartered accountants, which is a real inspiration.'

Where has the ACA taken me?

'I love to travel and luckily have had many opportunities to visit some amazing countries, with my favourite trips including trekking the Inca Trail in Peru and walking on the Perito Moreno glacier in Argentina.'

Carol Handa

ICAEW Chartered Accountant
Finance Director, Operations
L'Oréal



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What skills are employers looking for?

It's not just about your academic background. Your personal qualities will be important to potential employers too. Provide real examples of your abilities in the following areas and you'll have a greater chance of success.

- 

PEOPLE SKILLS - Communicate complex business information and advice in an easy-to-understand way.
- 

TEAM WORKING - Knowing when to operate as a team member or a team leader is vital.
- 

DECISION MAKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING - Make sound, ethical business decisions by collating, analysing and interpreting data.
- 

PROFESSIONALISM - Behave professionally and with ethics at all times.
- 

COMMERCIAL AWARENESS - Think creatively about problems to identify solutions and give organisations the competitive edge.
- 

IT SKILLS - Develop well rounded technical skills and keep up to date with technology.

'The social side of life as an ACA student is great. There are lots of ICAEW events to get involved with, including black-tie balls. I've made some great friends both at college and at work.'

Where has the ACA taken me?

'Travelling has always been a goal of mine. While working with PwC I've been able to go to Sri Lanka and Cyprus as part of my work and training, which was a great experience!'

How has the ACA developed me?

'As well as the technical skills I've developed while studying for the ACA I've also learnt leadership, coaching and ownership. These skills have really helped me to excel in the business, they have also helped me outside of work because they are so transferable.'

George Eaton
ACA student
Senior Associate
PwC



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Where can it take you?

Whatever your values and ambition the ACA qualification can help you achieve more. Here's where it can take you:



TRAVEL THE WORLD

Work in far more places than you'd imagine - the ACA is recognised in 154 countries.



GO INTO BUSINESS

Fashion. Sport. Media. Whatever the sector, they need chartered accountants to help with everything from launching a new product line, to investing in a new player.



WORK IN PUBLIC PRACTICE

Own a share in your own business as a partner in an accountancy practice, or rise to the top of a global professional services organisation.



MOVE INTO BANKING

A huge range of careers, in everything from investment banking and financial control, to mergers, acquisitions and risk.



WORK FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Help run the finances of government departments, the NHS, universities or charities around the globe.



BECOME A CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

After completing the ACA qualification you will have the leadership skills and experience that can help you rise to the position of CEO.

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What can you earn?

If the career opportunities weren't rewarding enough, salaries for trainee and qualified chartered accountants are extremely competitive too.

These are average figures that include qualified chartered accountants with substantial experience. However, even at the start of your career, you can expect to receive an attractive salary.

£30k*

is the average graduate starting salary for Accounting and Professional Services.

£49.9k**

is the average salary for a newly qualified ICAEW Chartered Accountant with 0-2 years' experience.

£110.8k**

is the average salary plus bonus, for ICAEW Chartered Accountants working in business.

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What training is needed to complete the ACA?

The ACA is both rigorous and challenging. But that's why our chartered accountants are always in demand.

The ACA qualification combines study and exams with 'on-the-job' experience. This means you'll be based with an employer, doing real work and earning a salary as you train. It typically takes three years to complete the ACA. You'll need to find an authorised employer to support you and enter into a training agreement with them.

The training agreement will outline the support you'll receive during training and will include details about tuition, study leave and mentoring.

In addition to giving you time out of the office to study, employers will pay for your tuition with a dedicated provider and also pay for your exam and student registration fees.

You'll need to successfully complete the ACA qualification before you can apply to become a member of ICAEW.

Once this is approved, you can use the letters ACA after your name and will be recognised as an ICAEW Chartered Accountant.



ACA students, PwC

THERE ARE FOUR ELEMENTS TO ACA TRAINING:

Practical work experience

You need to record 450 days of relevant 'on-the-job' work experience during your period of approved training. If you have completed an internship or placement year with one of our authorised employers, you may be able to count up to 12 months' experience towards your ACA training.

Ethics and professional scepticism

Ethics and professional scepticism are an essential part of being a chartered accountant. You'll follow a structured programme to ensure you apply them - focusing on areas such as integrity, objectivity and independence.

Accountancy, finance and business modules

15 modules, each with its own exam. These modules are staged across three levels: the first introduces you to core concepts; the latter two build on your growing technical knowledge and experience.

Professional development

Demonstrate your competence in seven key professional skills (such as communication, team working and decision making) by providing an example from your work experience.



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What is the training and exam schedule?

Your employer will guide you on the pace and order that you complete the modules. There's a lot of flexibility to the ACA. With the exception of the Case Study, which must be attempted last, modules can be taken in any order.



RECOGNITION FOR PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

You may be eligible for credit on some modules if you:

- studied accounting, finance or business at university - visit icaew.com/cpl; and/or
- worked for one of our authorised employers on an internship or placement - visit icaew.com/cpl.



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Why choose us?

Hopefully what you've read so far answers this question. If not, here's a reminder of the top five reasons ...

- 1 The ACA prepares you for leadership right up to board level. That's why 78 of the FTSE 100 companies have an ICAEW Chartered Accountant on their board.*
- 2 Very rewarding salaries for trainees and qualified chartered accountants. The average salary for newly qualified ICAEW Chartered Accountants is £49.9k.**
- 3 With the ACA on your CV you can work in any industry around the world, so you can shape your career around your interests.
- 4 ACA students have a high first-time pass rate of 79%,*** thanks to the quality of the learning material and support they receive throughout their studies.
- 5 92% of all ACA students qualify in four years or less,**** meaning fewer resits, and faster career progression.



ACA students, PwC

'So far, my career in accountancy has taken me across America, Europe and India – in fact to many more places than I would have imagined, both in terms of travel and my career.'

Where has the ACA taken me?

'To India, with Deloitte, where I rolled out an outsource programme while still training for the ACA. To Poland, Slovakia, Austria and Iceland as a Finance Manager with Tesco, franchising their online clothing business internationally. And from New York to Los Angeles in my current role.'

What do I do?

'I work for fashion retail start-up, Depop, growing the finance function and helping the business thrive. We deal with a fair few celebrities and high-profile events, which makes budgeting and forecasting more interesting.'

Zoe Wong

ICAEW Chartered Accountant
Finance and Operations Director
Depop



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What to do next?

1. RESEARCH

Visit our website [icaew.com/careers](https://www.icaew.com/careers), to find out more about the ACA. You can hear from our members and learn about the different routes open to you.

And don't forget to take a look at our YouTube videos too: [youtube.com/icaewcareers](https://www.youtube.com/icaewcareers).

2. ATTRACT AN EMPLOYER

Now you're ready to start looking for an employer. Try to start your search early because most organisations advertise their opportunities up to a year in advance of the start date.

Search our job board, [icaewtrainingvacancies.com](https://www.icaewtrainingvacancies.com), for the latest opportunities. You can also sign up for updates and job alerts by emailing: studentrecruitment@icaew.com.



ACA students, EY

3. WHAT ARE THE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

- A strong academic record.
- At least a 2:1 in your degree (the subject isn't important).
- At least two A-levels and three GCSE passes or equivalent.
- A genuine interest in, and commitment to, your chosen career path.
- The ability to stand out from the crowd, and show how you can add value to an organisation.

4. HOW CAN I GET A HEAD START?

ICAEW's Student Scheme (USS) is an online training resource we've created to help you develop the workplace skills that employers want. It also entitles you to study ICAEW CFAB at no extra cost. (This certificate covers the first six modules of the ACA). Find out more at [icaew.com/uss](https://www.icaew.com/uss).

5. KEEP IN TOUCH

 ICAEW Careers

 @ICAEW_Careers

 ICAEW Careers

'The ACA gives a great grounding in business and financial knowledge and is useful in any industry or country. I thought it would open doors everywhere, and it has.'

Where has the ACA taken me?

'Having qualified, I became a Humanitarian Aid Project Auditor and travelled to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine and Gaza, Cameroon, Nigeria and Mali. I have looked at disaster relief projects, Syrian refugee camps and nutrition and child protection projects for people displaced by violence. I then went on to become a Projects Finance Manager at an international charity aiming to transform lives through education.'

What has the ACA given me?

'Much more than I imagined - most notably the chance to work in my chosen field, international development. The technical accounting skills are only one part of what the ACA teaches you - you also develop people skills, analytical ability, project management expertise and much more.'

Sarah Dixon

ICAEW Chartered Accountant
Projects Finance Manager
Ark



ICAEW connects over 147,000 chartered accountants worldwide, providing this community of professionals with the power to build and sustain strong economies.

Training, developing and supporting accountants throughout their career, we ensure that they have the expertise and values to meet the needs of tomorrow's businesses.

Our profession is right at the heart of the decisions that will define the future, and we contribute by sharing our knowledge, insight and capabilities with others. That way, we can be sure that we are building robust, accountable and fair economies across the globe.

ICAEW is a member of Chartered Accountants Worldwide (CAW), which brings together 11 chartered accountancy bodies, representing over 1.6m members and students globally.

www.charteredaccountantsworldwide.com
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