

Accountancy Learning Career Programme

“Our purpose is to be *the* training provider that makes a lasting, positive, impact on the lives and careers of our learners and on the businesses of our employers, and in doing so, makes a real impact on the lives and careers of our team, allowing them to fulfil their professional and vocational ambitions.” *Accountancy Learning mission statement.*

With respect to careers, Accountancy Learning Limited aims to provide high quality information, advice and guidance which will enable staff, students, employers and enquirers to make informed choices about ways in which Accountancy Learning can meet their individual training and development needs and how to progress in an accountancy career.

It is in the best interests of our learners and their employers for learners to understand the possible career paths ahead of them. Their career path may not lie with their current employer and we recognise the conflict of interest here, but for many learners they face an exciting and rewarding career with their existing employer and we can support them on that journey.

We recognise that it is not unusual for people to become disheartened with their current career path and we can help them to explore the opportunities with their employer.

To achieve this we do the following.

- We only use tutors with experience in the profession rather than people from an education background. Our tutors collectively have experience in practice, in industry, in the public sector and in the not-for-profit sector. Tutors who have worked in practice may have had experience in bookkeeping, accounts preparation, taxation and audit. This means that learners can receive directly relevant information, advice and guidance from accountancy professionals.
- We provide a personal tutor for learners who provides one-to-one support for career information, advice and guidance (as well as academic support and personal development). We do not rely on a centralised careers team – careers guidance is everyone’s responsibility. The one-to-one relationship facilitates a stronger professional relationship between the learner and the tutor which encourages learners to seek advice from their tutor.
- We recognise that a learner’s personal tutor may have had a particular set of professional experiences that do not align with the ambitions of the learner. While the tutor can provide general careers information, advice and guidance to their learner, they can call upon other tutors in the team to provide advice based on their own professional experience.

- Information, advice and guidance is provided at each progress review meeting. But the flexible one-to-one learner/tutor approach allows learners to ask for *ad hoc* careers advice.
- We partner with the employers of our learners and with other employers, via our work with ICAEW, to understand the needs of employers and link our advice to these needs.
- We align our careers programme with the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- We offer an academic programme that is sufficiently broad to expose learners to a range of career opportunities (financial reporting, management accounting, performance management, taxation, audit and assurance, and financial management).
- The quality of information, advice and guidance provided to our learners is subject to internal quality observations.
- To obtain assurance over the quality of our information, advice and guidance the Senior Management Team seek Matrix accreditation (<https://matrixstandard.com/>).
- We monitor where learners go after completion of their apprenticeship to identify the success we have in facilitating career progression.

Typical career progression

Qualification	In practice	Not in practice
Level 2		Bookkeeping and transaction processing
Level 3	Bookkeeping, VAT returns, audit testing	Reconciliations, reporting, maintaining ledgers and registers
Level 4	Self assessment, other taxes, preparing accounts, supporting juniors	Preparing budgets and forecasts, working with wider stakeholders, more involvement with month end and year end procedures
Level 7	Assistant manager	Assistant manager, manager
Post qualification	Manager Director/Partner	Director Chief Executive Officer

This can vary significantly from employer to employer.

Gatsby Benchmarks

The Gatsby Benchmarks are a framework for providing worldclass careers guidance in education. Accountancy Learning uses these benchmarks to assure the quality of our guidance to our learners and their parents where appropriate.

1 A stable careers programme

Our careers programme is embedded into our curriculum. Our choice of academic qualification for the four apprenticeship levels we offer provides access to a range of disciplines within the accountancy profession, allowing our learners to explore the various career opportunities ahead of them. The expectation of self-reflection and continuous improvement is integrated into the apprenticeship standards via the knowledge, skills and behaviours set. We provide information, advice and guidance at each progress review to support the development of each learner.

2 Learning from career and labour market information

Our faculty of accounting tutors have qualifications from a variety of accounting professional bodies and may have taught for other qualifications in addition to their own. We are well informed and experienced in the different accounting qualifications and can advise learners on them effectively.

Accountancy Learning provides a variety of study options including distance learning, tutor-supported independent learning, physical and virtual synchronous teaching and virtual asynchronous teaching (depending on the programme). We can advise learners on the advantages and disadvantages of the different study methods so that learners can follow a model that suits their needs.

We partner with a variety of employers, both the employers of our apprentices and other employers via the ICAEW networks. This gives us an insight into the needs of the labour market for accountants.

Accountants are employed with firms of accountants but also work in industry, commerce, public sector and not-for-profit sector. We work with employers in all of these sectors.

We are members of the Careers and Enterprise Company community to keep us up-to-date with career guidance best practice.

3 Addressing the needs of each young person

We provide a personal tutor for each learner who has experience in the accounting profession. We recognise that the careers advice needs of learners evolve as they progress through their apprenticeships and we provide one-to-one information, advice and guidance, tailored to their specific needs at the time.

As much as possible a learner has the same personal tutor for the duration of their time with Accountancy Learning (from level 2 to level 4). This allows us to provide integrated information, advice and guidance.

Our one-to-one approach means that any learners with special educational needs are supported to meet their individual needs.

We record information, advice and guidance provided in review meeting documentation paying attention to requests that advice be confidential.

4 Linking curriculum learning to careers

Accountancy Learning's curriculum is occupation led. The curriculum is designed by qualified accountants to ensure its relevance. The knowledge, skills and behaviours are integral to the progression of accountants for a variety of career opportunities.

Qualifications expose learners to areas of the profession which may be outside their current experience to open their eyes to opportunities. These include bookkeeping, accounts preparation, taxation, audit and assurance and financial management.

Information about progression routes is provided in our apprenticeship management platform and is discussed with learners during progress reviews.

5 Encounters with employers and employees

Our apprentices spend an average of at least four days per week in a workplace, gaining real-world experience of a range of accountancy disciplines. This gives them the opportunity to apply the theory from their studies to the real world.

Our learners are exposed to employees of other employers via our monthly Star Student Award and if they attend any of our college sites.

6 Experiences of workplaces

Our apprentices spend an average of at least four days per week in a workplace, gaining real-world experience of a range of accountancy disciplines.

7 Encounters with further and higher education

At Accountancy Learning we recognise that our approach does not suit all people. Alternative education models include A levels at school or college, studying accounting qualifications at a further education college and university education. We recognise that the profession does not require graduates to have a relevant degree, or any type of relevant qualification to be able to enter the profession which opens multiple entry routes.

We provide advice on routes into the accountancy profession at various events.

Our staff attend events organised by the [Rise Initiate](#), facilitated by The Talent Foundry. These events provide an opportunity for Accountancy Learning staff to provide

information, advice and guidance to pupils from years 7 to 11 in areas of low social mobility.

Our staff attend career events organised by schools, colleges and employers. Staff can provide information, advice and guidance about routes into the profession to potential accountants and their parents.

Aspiring apprentices undergo initial assessment prior to being accepted into an apprenticeship programme. Based on the initial assessment we provide information, advice and guidance on a suitable approach for the learner based on their individual needs. If our approach is not suited to the learner we advise on alternatives such as attending a more traditional college or a non-funded distance learning approach.

All apprentices have a five-week trial period at the beginning of their apprenticeship to gain a feel for the Accountancy Learning approach. If learners, employers or Accountancy Learning feel that the approach is not suitable for the learner we provide appropriate information, advice and guidance about alternative routes.

Some of our tutors are graduates. Some have a relevant degree and some do not. These tutors can be called upon to provide advice about their experiences.

8 Personal guidance

Learners meet with their personal accounting tutor at progress review meetings at least every 12 weeks. Learners may request career advice between these meetings too. Learners may request career advice in a meeting that their employer does not attend. Our learners are allocated a personal tutor who will typically support them from their level 2 apprenticeship through to level 4. This allows our tutors to become more familiar with the learner to provide personalised advice.

Our information, advice and guidance will meet the following standards.

1. We shall provide accurate and impartial information, advice and guidance to existing and potential students about the courses, qualifications and support services we offer, taking into account that services offered by other providers may be more suitable.
2. We shall provide accurate and impartial information, advice and guidance to employers about the courses, qualifications and training services we offer.
3. We shall provide accurate and impartial information, advice and guidance to Accountancy Learning staff about their rights, entitlements and responsibilities as employees, about staff development procedures and opportunities, about performance management and grievance procedures, and about opportunities to contribute to the Accountancy Learning strategic planning.

4. We shall provide a service that conforms to the standards laid down by the National Information, Advice and Guidance Board, and which meets the standards required for Matrix accreditation.

5. We shall provide a service which is confidential to the individual, and which meets the highest standards of equality of opportunity.