Registered Learning Partner (RLP) – Handbook
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1 What is accreditation?

ACCA’s Registered Learning Partner programme (RLP) gives formal recognition to leading learning providers offering quality tuition and support to students taking the ACCA’s non-core qualifications. It is the platform from which ACCA can develop a mutually beneficial relationship, increasing the global availability of effective and innovative ACCA course delivery and first-class student support.

WHO IS THIS HANDBOOK FOR?
This handbook is primarily intended as a source of information for those learning providers interested in holding accreditation for teaching one of the following qualifications:

- Diploma in International Financial Reporting
- Certificate in International Financial Reporting
- Certificate in International Auditing
- Certificate in International Financial Reporting Standards for SMEs
- Certificate in International Public Sector Accounting Standards
- Russian Tax Diploma.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO START TEACHING ACCA’S NON-CORE QUALIFICATIONS?
ACCA doesn’t directly provide tuition for its qualifications, however as an awarding body, ACCA relies on its global network of third party learning providers to help our students prepare for their examinations. Potential learning providers do not need to obtain permission to run courses from ACCA before commencing tuition towards ACCA’s non-core qualifications. ACCA courses may be offered differently from institution to institution:

- they can be run face to face, online or through traditional distance learning
- they can be run full-time or part-time
- they can be run over longer or shorter periods of time.

WHAT IS THE REGISTERED LEARNING PARTNER PROGRAMME?
ACCA’s Registered Learning Partner programme is a quality-assurance programme that aims to recognise high-quality learning providers who can prove that they meet ACCA’s performance targets, representing global best practice in the provision of ACCA course tuition and support. To become a Registered Learning Partner you must be preparing to start teaching or have commenced at least one of ACCA’s non-core qualifications which are detailed below:

- Certificate in International Financial Reporting
- Certificate in International Auditing
- Certificate in International Financial Reporting Standards for SMEs
- Certificate in International Public Sector Accounting Standards
- Certificate in International Public Sector Accounting Standards
- Russian Tax Diploma.

WHO CAN BE ACCREDITED?
Learning providers that solely provide text books and study materials to students are not eligible to be approved under the Registered Learning Partner programme. The Registered Learning Partner programme recognises centres that provide tuition and support to students as well as text books and study materials.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE RLP PROGRAMME?
As a Registered Learning Partner you can take advantage of the following exclusive benefits that will provide you with a competitive edge over non-accredited providers:

ACCA members can see you are quality assured
Members will know you have been assessed against ACCA’s widely recognised and highly regarded global best practice benchmarks. They have our assurance that your tuition is high quality and that you have efficient support frameworks in place.

Enhance your brand
By becoming a Registered Learning Partner you not only show members and their employers that you are committed to providing high quality tuition and support, but enhance your own reputation by association with ACCA.

More information can be found here: http://www.accaglobal.com/uk/en/learning-provider/approved-learning-partner.html
1  WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

**Excellent customer service**
When you become accredited, we’ll ensure that you’re provided with excellent customer service and support by ACCA’s headquarters and national office network.

**ACCA will promote your institution**
You will have an entry on ACCA’s online Registered Learning Partner Directory.
We will also promote your approved status by strongly recommending that our members study with your institution and explaining to them the high quality learning experience they can expect from accredited providers.

**Marketing tools and support**
You will receive a certificate and a distinctive logo to use on your advertising.

**HOW MUCH WILL IT COST TO BECOME ACCREDITED?**
£250 annual fee per site.
Once your application has been approved, you will be invoiced for the approval fee. However it is worth noting that the annual renewal processes take place in the last quarter of the approval period. Approval periods run from 1 April to 31 March of the following year. All existing Registered Learning Partners are invoiced for the following year’s annual fee during this time. Applicants gaining approval late in the year may therefore incur two sets of fees in a short space of time.
Payment should be made in £ sterling to ‘ACCA’ and sent directly to the Accreditation Department in Glasgow. Please do not send payment to ACCA by email as emails are not encrypted and therefore not regarded as a secure method of sending payment details.
You may send your payment details by our secure fax +44 (0)141 534 4151.

**WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION?**
In order to be considered for accreditation, you must be able to fully demonstrate that you meet a number of performance targets in areas such as institution management, course management and delivery.

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<th>Course management and delivery</th>
<th>Assessment element</th>
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The full list of targets has been included overleaf along with the evidence that the New Accreditations team must review as part of your application. All targets must be evidenced as part of your application.
### Part 1 – Institution Management

#### Gold

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<th>Assessment element</th>
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| Terms and conditions | 1.1 All students are issued with the institution’s terms and conditions of enrolment, including refund and deferment policies. Students are asked to actively confirm that they have read the terms and conditions on enrolment. Registered Learning Partners are required to include the following line on the signing page of their enrolment form: **Before signing this Enrolment Form, students are reminded to ensure that they have clearly understood all the terms of their enrolment with XXXXXXX (name), in particular clauses concerning refunds, deferments, waivers, course transfers and visa applications (when applicable).** | - copy of learning providers terms and conditions of enrolment  
- copies of enrolment forms; details stating how terms and conditions are communicated to students. | The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that students signing up for tuition at your institution are given all appropriate information on their courses upfront and prior to enrolling and committing to paying for tuition.  
By reviewing your terms and conditions we are ensuring that there is transparency around your terms and conditions and there are no hidden policies that students should be aware of.  
ACCA should be assured that you manage the expectations of your ACCA students at all times.  
Terms and conditions should cover areas such as:  
- Refunds – under what circumstances can the student claim a refund for a course they have paid for?  
- Deferments – under what circumstances can a student defer a course they have paid for to a later start date?  
- Waivers – eligibility criteria for any available fee waivers or discounts, and the student’s responsibilities in return for any entitlement  
- Course transfers – under what circumstances can a student transfer to a different course once they have paid?  
- Visa applications – how much responsibility does the LP take for visa applications, and what is the student’s position if visa applications are refused?  
ACCA’s standard term MUST be included on the enrolment form. |
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| **Complaints procedure** | **1.2** A formal, transparent complaints procedure or charter is in place and available to students. Complaints received are investigated thoroughly and promptly, within specified timeframes. Complaints log is maintained. | • copy of the complaints policy  
• details/evidence of how it is communicated to students  
• copy of the complaints log (with details on how these were dealt with and any action taken as result). | The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that students are aware of how to make a complaint regarding your product or service. Any student that wishes to make a complaint to ACCA regarding your institution will be requested to exhaust your complaints procedure first.  
The contents and conditions around your complaints policy should be at your discretion and we do appreciate that your policies will be unique to your business and the type of tuition offered.  
Complaints policies normally set out:  
- How informal complaints can be made – who should these be raised with in the first instance?  
- How formal complaints can be made – is there a standard template, how should it be submitted, etc.  
- How long the complainant can expect to wait for acknowledgement of their complaint, and for a response.  
- How complaints will be treated – who will be involved in reviewing the complaint and will they be treated confidentially?  
- Whether the student has any right to appeal the outcome of their complaint, and any related processes. |
### WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

#### 1.3 Study environment

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| Study environment  | 1.3 Study environment must be appropriate for mode of delivery, course type and be conducive to study. | **Face to face tuition**  
- copy of lease agreement/proof of ownership or any other evidence confirming arrangements in place to secure the teaching premises  
- detail of any arrangements in place to ensure premises are comfortable and conducive to study at all times.  
**Distance learning/E-learning/Blended learning**  
- online environment is fit for purpose and is supported by appropriate securities/contingency plan for online system support  
- demo of online product and related guidelines should be supplied for review on application;  
- copy of lease agreement/proof of ownership or any other evidence confirming arrangements in place to secure the teaching premises. | The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure you have appropriate premises for tuition depending on the type of tuition offered by your institution. For those tuition providers that offer face to face tuition the New Accreditation team would expect to review a current lease. For those learning providers that offer distance learning/e-learning/blended learning tuition the New Accreditations team would expect to review a current lease and demonstration of your online product. If your institution is government funded you should make the New Accreditations team aware of this at the time of making your application. |

#### 1.4 Financial viability

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</table>
| Financial viability| 1.4 Learning provider is financially viable. | **audited financial statements or confirmation of appropriate government funding.**  
- officially prepared financial statements  
- confirmation of financial viability from appropriate third party | The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that you are in a positive financial position to operate while ACCA students are attending your courses. If a student has committed to attending your courses then ACCA must be assured that you will be in a position to honour this agreement. |
## PART 2 – ACCA COURSE MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

### Tutors

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.1 (a)</strong></td>
<td>Tutors are knowledgeable and experienced in their chosen field and hold qualifications appropriate to the subjects they teach.</td>
<td>• tutor CVs/summaries of tutor qualifications and experience.</td>
<td>The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that your tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced to ensure that ACCA students have the best possible teaching experience at your institution. Through your tutors students will obtain the knowledge required for their journey through their ACCA papers. Monitoring of tutors would typically include: • Student pass rates • Student retention rates • Student feedback</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>2.1 (b)</strong></td>
<td>Tutor performance is monitored and development opportunities provided.</td>
<td>• details of internal monitoring in place (including individual tutors’ pass rate performance) and any actions taken to improve tutor performance.</td>
<td>We would not expect to find that part-qualified tutors are teaching papers beyond their own qualification level.</td>
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### Student feedback

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<tr>
<td><strong>2.2 (a)</strong></td>
<td>Student feedback on performance is actively sought, reviewed and acted upon where appropriate.</td>
<td>• Summary of student feedback • Feedback form • Learning providers should have a system in place to regularly conduct and review student feedback. Action plans for necessary improvements should be agreed upon.</td>
<td>The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that your institution collates, summarises and analyses student feedback to ensure that you are proactively identifying issues and trends with your tuition provision and resulting actions. It’s good practice to schedule feedback at particular times through a course, perhaps midway through and again at the end of the course to gauge the impact of any improvements from the first round.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.2 (b)</strong></td>
<td>Student feedback questionnaires should include questions on administration, study environment, tutor performance and course content and delivery.</td>
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</table>
### WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

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<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching/study programme</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.3 (a)</strong> Students are provided with guidance on their programme of study, including a detailed breakdown of their course into modules or study sessions. There must be appropriate PER references relevant to various subject areas, as well as advice on homework and preparatory guidelines, timings of assignments, mock examinations and progress tests.</td>
<td>• samples of teaching/study programmes/course schedules provided to students.</td>
<td>The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that students are aware of the topics that will be covered each week prior to their lectures which will allow them to undertake further reading. Programme of study should highlight when homework and mock examinations are due to be submitted and in addition ACCA’s Practical Experience Requirement (PER) references. The New Accreditations team would expect a learning provider to link ACCA syllabus to the practical elements of ACCA’s performance objectives as part of PER requirements. This will help students apply their knowledge to what is expected of them in the workplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2.3 (b)</strong> Mock examinations and timed progress tests are set, reviewed and returned with constructive criticism around content and style within a specified turnaround time.</td>
<td>• copies of mock examinations/practice tests; records of student attendance rates; summaries of performance at mock examinations/practice tests.</td>
<td>The New Accreditations team will assess your evidence for this target to ensure that students have completed a mock examination prior to their final ACCA examination and are therefore better equipped to pass their examination. We would expect to see the LP using mock exams that reflect the structure and content of a real ACCA exam. We also need to see evidence that the students’ mock examination attempts have been adequately marked and returned to the students so that they can take action on any areas of concern. Some things we would expect to see: • Comments and feedback provided – if students have received a poor mark in a mock exam, they need to know how they can improve this for the real exam • Turnaround times – students need enough time to be able to rectify any issues in their knowledge or exam technique.</td>
</tr>
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2 How to make an application for Registered Learning Partner

To become a Registered Learning Partner, you are expected to demonstrate that you meet challenging performance targets, representing global best practice in the provision of ACCA course tuition and support. To become a Registered Learning Partner you must be preparing to start teaching or have commenced at least one of ACCA’s non-core qualifications. The first step in making an application is to contact the New Accreditations team on newaccreditations@accaglobal.com to request application documentation for the RLP programme.

**HOW DO I MAKE A FULL APPLICATION?**

In order to make a full application for the RLP programme you must complete and submit the following set of documentation:

- Fully complete application form
- Fully complete performance assessment matrix
- Payment details. A £250 approval fee is payable with the application (please note payment will not be taken for applications that are not successful).
- Evidence in support of each performance target.

Applications received without all of the above documentation will be returned to you for completion. If your application is returned to you then all documentation must be submitted again when you decide to resubmit your application.

**Please note:** institutions not teaching in English are required to provide translated documentation for review.

It should be noted that as well as checking that the above documentation is present, the New Accreditations team will conduct a review of your evidence to ensure that a sufficient level of information has been submitted for each performance target. If an insufficient level of documentation has been submitted, your application will be returned to you with a checklist of targets that must be evidenced before you consider resubmitting an application to ACCA.

After checking that all appropriate documentation and evidence has been submitted the New Accreditations team will then undertake a detailed review of your submitted evidence against the Registered Learning Partner performance targets. We aim to conduct our review of your documentation in three weeks.

After the assessment, the New Accreditations team will determine your eligibility for full approval under the Registered Learning Partner programme using their findings from the review of your documentation.

If your application has been successful you will be sent an outcome letter, Registered Learning Partner logo and certificate. In addition you will be added to ACCA’s Registered Learning Partner Directory. ACCA’s Registered Learning Partner Directory includes all Registered Learning Partners who are each given a prominent entry within the directory.

ACCA’s full performance targets can be located on pages 7–14 of this document. Please ensure that you have fully read and understood each performance target and detailed guidance before submitting the above documentation to the New Accreditations team.

**HELPFUL HINTS**

To try to ensure that you receive an outcome as soon as possible please see below the three most common reasons applications are returned.

1. Missing documentation – In order to accept an application we require the following to be provided:
   - Application form
   - Performance Assessment Matrix
   - Supporting documentation for all targets

2. No payment – In order to accept an application we require payment information for the £250 approval fee to be submitted along with the application (this will only be processed if an application is finalised).

3. Missing evidence – In order to accept an application we require documentary evidence for all performance targets.
WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR BECOMING A REGISTERED LEARNING PARTNER?

INSTITUTION
Contact the New Accreditations Team by email to request application documentation

ACCREDITATION
Within five days, send application documentation by email

INSTITUTION
Complete and submit a full application

ACCREDITATION
Within five days, determine that we have all required information to proceed with the assessment of the application

ACCREDITATION
Conduct a full assessment of the organisation’s supporting documentation against the relevant criteria

ACCREDITATION
Communicate outcome of application to the institution and update the Registered Learning Partner Directory
HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR ACCA TO DETERMINE IF AN APPLICATION IS COMPLETE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-checks</td>
<td>The Accreditation Department will aim to provide you with an indication as to whether all necessary information has been received within five working days of receipt of application and verifications. If this turnaround is not possible a member of the Accreditation Department will provide an estimated date of completion upon receipt of the full application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full assessments</td>
<td>The Accreditation Department will aim to provide you with a full outcome within three weeks of receipt of all necessary documentation. If this turnaround is not possible, a member of the Accreditation Department will provide an estimated date of completion.</td>
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</table>

WHO CAN HELP ME IN ACCA TO MAKE AN APPLICATION?
If you have any questions about the Registered Learning Partner Programme or how to make an application please contact the New Accreditations team on newaccreditations@accaglobal.com or +44 (0)141 534 4199.

IAAER GLOBAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR ACCOUNTING EDUCATORS
As a Registered Learning Partner, you will be expected to abide by the International Association for Accounting Education and Research (IAAER) Global Code of Ethics for Accounting Educators. The code of ethics is designed to guide accounting learning providers by underlining their responsibilities in this field. Visit the IAAER website at www.iaaer.org to see the Code of Ethics in full.

WHAT WILL I RECEIVE IF MY APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL?
On approval, you will receive confirmation from the New Accreditations team and, if applicable, this will also detail any conditions or recommendations upon which your approval is based. A certificate declaring your approval will be enclosed with the confirmation letter along with a logo which can be displayed on promotional materials.
3 Renewal

The approval period runs from 1 April to 31 March of each year. All Registered Learning Partners are required to renew their approval each year, before the expiry of the existing approval. Annual renewal is an administrative process which must be completed before approval for the next period is confirmed.

The annual renewal process requires you to:

- verify your contact details and the details displayed on the Registered Learning Partner directory and amend if necessary
- complete and return the annual renewal form advising ACCA of changes and new developments within the institution, with supporting documentation where appropriate
- pay the appropriate annual fee.

You will be advised by email that the annual renewal process has commenced in January each year.

It is important to adhere to the closing date given in order to ensure renewals are confirmed to all learning providers by 31 March. Upon successful completion of the renewal process, ACCA will issue an approval certificate and a Registered Learning Partner logo.

We accept primary evidence from Registered Learning Partners as part of our monitoring, however, we may consider this in conjunction with information produced by other agencies and regulatory bodies where appropriate, before reaching the outcome relating to the completion of the renewal process as part of the Registered Learning Partner programme.

Failure to inform ACCA of substantial changes or developments within your institution, or to submit renewal information by the deadline communicated by ACCA, may be grounds for suspension of approval or for removal of the provider from the Registered Learning Partner programme.

Payment of the annual fee alone will not secure renewal for the following approval period. Failure to complete the full renewal process may be grounds for temporary suspension of approval or for removal of the provider from the Registered Learning Partner programme, and under such circumstances any unallocated fees paid in this regard will be returned to the provider.

Registered Learning Partners should ensure that advertising or promotional materials do not indicate their continued approval status for the following approval period until renewal has been confirmed in writing by ACCA’s accreditation team.

The renewal of any Registered Learning Partner found to be making such claims will be immediately suspended pending investigation and resolution of the issue. ACCA will take no responsibility for any inconvenience or costs incurred from the resulting delay to renewal following suspension. In the event that the identified issue cannot be resolved in an acceptable timeframe, ACCA reserves the right to permanently remove the learning provider from the Registered Learning Partner programme at its discretion.
4 What useful contacts might I need in ACCA?

FOR QUERIES REGARDING REGISTERED LEARNING PARTNER ACCREDITATION
Please contact ACCA's New Accreditations team on
+44 (0)141 534 4199.

FOR QUERIES REGARDING EXISTING REGISTERED LEARNING PARTNER APPROVALS
Please contact ACCA's Existing Accreditations team on
+44 (0)141 534 4540.

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION
Please contact ACCA Connect on
+44 (0)141 582 2000.