

# ACCA SA's new pathway to audit specialisation

 By [Katja Hamilton](#)

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In a bid to offer aspiring registered auditors another pathway to the audit specialisation programme, the Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors (Irba) has recently accredited the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) (South Africa) as an additional professional accounting body.



Source: [Pexels](#)

On successful completion of the Audit Development Programme (ADP), candidate auditors may be eligible for registration as registered auditors (RAs).

## Celebrating newfound success

This is a promising advancement for the audit profession, as it unlocks a potential pipeline of skilled accountants pursuing audit careers, offering relief amid the current talent shortage experienced by firms.

“This is a very emotional day, a culmination of weeks and years of work in the making. It’s been a long journey and taken 24 years to get here. It’s a joy to share my thanks and appreciation with all of you,” said ACCA South Africa head Portia Mkhabela at the official media announcement.

She explained that the ACCA developed its audit pathway experience requirements for ACCA members in South Africa in accordance with Irba's competency framework for registered auditors.

"This includes the establishment of an ACCA audit training scheme with approved training offices. Joining the ADP and becoming registered auditors (RAs) will require the completion of specific ACCA exams, an ethics and professional skills module, and three years of practical experience at an approved employer audit firm," she said.

## Elevating auditors' profiles

"We're delighted that the Irba is providing a route for ACCA members and future members to gain RA status in South Africa. This will grant our members, who have the relevant experience, auditing practice rights in the country."

Mkhabela said ACCA's license will reflect on the calibre of South Africa's professionals who work in businesses and the public sector and that this accreditation will raise the status and profile of auditors in the country.

"This is because the association is ethically motivated, forward-thinking, and by backing the prosperity of its members, it will drive sustainable business and a burgeoning economy for SA," she said.

"This is particularly because we're striving for an economy where there is transparency and trust."

## Accreditation of professional bodies

The Auditing Profession Act 26 of 2005 plays a crucial role in regulating the auditing profession in South Africa. One of its significant mandates is the accreditation of professional bodies, outlining specific criteria that must be met to achieve accreditation. Sections 5(b) and 5(c) of the Act specify that if a professional accounting body fulfills the prescribed requirements for accreditation, the board is responsible for assessing and designating the validity period of the accreditation.

“ *Accountancy and finance professionals are at the forefront of the transition to a sustainable future according to the latest research by ACCA. Find out more in our new report Accounting for Society's Values. Read the report here: <https://t.co/6JGib5TWW1> [pic.twitter.com/Z4usZGphq4](https://t.co/6JGib5TWW1)— ACCA Official (@ACCAOfficial) June 22, 2023* ”

To streamline the accreditation process, the board has delegated the responsibility of considering and recommending professional body accreditations to the Education and Transformation Committee (Edcom). Furthermore, Edcom has appointed the Accreditation Committee (ACCOM) to evaluate applications for accreditation, including one from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).

Central to the assessment process is the Irba accreditation model, a comprehensive framework used to accredit and monitor professional bodies. This model sets out specific requirements for accreditation and defines a competency framework to ensure uniformity in the development of competencies for registered auditors in South Africa.

## A multi-layered evaluation ensures excellence

Imre Nagy, the chief executive officer of Irba, emphasises the significance of this model in fostering consistency and excellence within the auditing profession.

"The ACCA's application for accreditation was evaluated based on these requirements, involving a multi-layered evaluation process, meetings, workshops, and an iterative decision-making process across the relevant governance structures.

"Initial feedback from stakeholder engagement around the process has been positive, acknowledging the need for multiple professional bodies to broaden the pipeline for students and trainees to enter the audit profession."

Irba and ACCA will roll out post-accreditation deliverables by 1 April 2024. Irba's monitoring and education committees will ensure ongoing compliance with accreditation requirements for the profession's benefit.

The effective date from when ACCA members are able to register for the 18-month Audit Development Programme (ADP) is 1 April 2024.

## ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

Katja is the Finance, Property and Healthcare Editor at Bizcommunity.

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