

ACCOUNTING TECHNICIANS: Roundtable 6: Stakeholder Analysis

Accounting Technicians
Roundtable
22 June
2022



Project Overview

The Goal:

Achieving Accounting Technician Recognition

The Challenge:

Imagining
the Future

Positioning
the
Qualification

Recognising
the Benefits

Defining
an AT

The Stakeholders:

PAOs

Governments

Businesses

Development
Partners

The project is being addressed through a series of roundtables, with 1 – 5 held to date.....

1. Scene Setting

Aim: In terms of recognition

- ✓ If we are trying to fix something, what is it that is broken or not working?
- ✓ Where is the lack of recognition an issue e.g. generally or certain stakeholders?
- ✓ What are the barriers to achieving widespread recognition?

2. Imagining the Future

Aim: To explore 'the future AT'

- ✓ Will there be a market need/demand for this type of accountant?
- ✓ What roles (and critical skills) are envisaged?
- ✓ What, if anything, needs to change in how this type of accountant is perceived?

3. Positioning the Qualification

Aim: To explore if qualified ATs can be established as a recognised element of the broader accountancy profession

- ✓ Why has it not become a widely recognised qualification?
- ✓ Can the related issues be overcome?
- ✓ How could the qualification become an established part of the professional accountancy supply chain?

4. Recognising the Benefits

Aim: To explore the benefits of ATs and if these warrant the separate recognition of ATs

- ✓ Can compelling benefits be identified?
- ✓ What stakeholders have an interest in this cohort of accountants?
- ✓ How do these support the concept of separate recognition?

5. Defining an AT

Aim: To explore a common definition for an 'AT'

- ✓ Acknowledging current differences in terminologies & programs globally, would you like to see (& would your organisation support) a common term/name for this cohort?
- ✓ Is 'Accounting Technician' the right term/name for the desired designation?
- ✓ How could the designation be defined?

6. Stakeholder Analysis

Aim: To explore what is required from stakeholders

- ✓ Which stakeholders are key in achieving and maintaining clear recognition of ATs, and why?
- ✓ What would be expected of each of these key stakeholders – what should/could they do to create or support recognition?
- ✓ How could their buy-in and action be achieved?

RDT 5: Defining an AT - Outcomes

- ✓ Consensus a common name/term/concept needed for general, global use:
 - compromise will likely be required
 - local variation can exist, however preferably under a common global banner
- ✓ In terms of common name, consider the risks in:
 - Using the current generally recognised name of 'AT'; or
 - Changing it completely
- ✓ A clear, succinct definition will support the positioning of the AT within the accountancy profession

Amended Tagline and Definition – Post RDT 5

Tagline: *Accounting Technicians* - Qualified, practical and technical operators essential to the overall accountancy profession
or

Accounting Technicians - Practical, technically-focused and appropriately qualified accountants, essential to the overall accountancy profession

Definition: *Accounting Technicians (AT)* are part of the overall accountancy profession, complementing more senior accountants across all sectors, or working independently in less complex environments.

An AT has successfully completed an appropriate program of education to develop competencies in financial and non-financial systems and processes, data management and the preparation of information for decision-making. As a member of a professional accountancy organisation, an AT is subject to professional responsibilities, including ethical and continuing educational development requirements.

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Open Discussion

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Aim: To explore what is required from stakeholders

We asked attendees to consider three questions:

- 1. Which stakeholders (list them out) are key in achieving and maintaining clear recognition of ATs, and why?*
- 2. What would be expected of each of these key stakeholders - what should/could they do to create or support recognition?*
- 3. How could their buy-in and action be achieved?*

Responses from AAT UK, ACCA, IPA, NIAT – *Thank you!*

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

1. Which stakeholders are key in achieving and maintaining clear recognition of ATs, and why?

Directly relevant responses:

- i. IFAC – need clear buy-in and key [lead body] for global recognition / champions for AT
- ii. Regional bodies – follow IFAC lead for regional recognition / champions for ATs
- iii. PAOs (not providing ATQ or equivalent) – provide pathways,
- iv. AT bodies and other PAOs providing AT equivalent – require their knowledge/investment
- v. Government/Education policy Depts
- vi. Employers (includes private and public sector) – provide opportunities
- vii. Schools – careers advisors / promotion of AT route as a career option
- viii. Academia
- ix. Training Providers
- x. Development Partners – funders for skills development
- xi. Accountancy Firms (Larger firms / SMEs) – recognise ATs, offer opportunities, recruitment,
- xii. Civil Society
- xiii. Accounting / digital software providers

CAPA Thoughts

'Key' stakeholders to achieve and enable global recognition are those with significant control or influence over the direction of the profession:

- IFAC and regional bodies – to lead and champion global recognition
- PAOs (not providing ATQ or equivalent) - to recognise, and as appropriate embed, ATs as part of the profession and a legitimate membership option
- PAOs providing ATQ or equivalent - to lead, share, advise, support others
- Governments / Regulators – to include ATs into legislation or regulatory frameworks within jurisdictions

Without recognition from those in control, recognition by others will not follow

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

2. What would be expected of each of these key stakeholders – what should/could they do to create or support recognition?

Directly relevant responses:

- i. IFAC – Lead and champion recognition; standards; on-going endorsement
- ii. Regional Bodies – lead and champion regionally, endorse, promote
- iii. PAOs (non-AT) - Recognition, Adoption, Endorsement, Promote, Provide clear pathways (incl exemptions)
- iv. Other AT bodies – Invest in recognition, Support, advise, partnerships, promotion of AT definitions
- v. Government/Education policy Depts – Funding, Use the right terminology
- vi. Employers – recruitment opportunities, support and pay for AT training and membership
- vii. Schools – careers advice to young people – promote AT role
- viii. Academia – offer AT programs, Promote AT role
- ix. Training Providers – delivery of qualifications
- x. Development Partners – promote AT pathway / PQ as part of accountancy profession/supply
- xi. Accountancy Firms – recognise and support AT programs
- xii. Civil Society – understand the wider spectrum of accountants
- xiii. Accounting / digital software providers – marketing and communications

CAPA Thoughts

Each [set of] stakeholders has different roles to play at different times.

A “Roadmap to Recognition” effectively emerges:

- Recognition by the Profession - IFAC, regional bodies, PAOs – to initially accept
- Legal Recognition – government / regulators – to approve/facilitate as required
- Institutional Stakeholders – development partners, standard setters – to support adoption and implementation
- Suppliers –Secondary and Tertiary Institutions, Training Providers – to provide education programs and pathways
- Employers – accountancy firms, corporate and public sectors – resulting in market recognition

Recognise >> Adopt >> Implement

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

3. How could their buy-in and action be achieved?

Directly relevant responses:

- i. IFAC / regional bodies – lobbying, highlight commercial & membership growth opportunities / value of AT as part of the supply chain
- ii. PAOs (Not AT)- IFAC to lead in formal recognition of AT cohort as part of the accountancy profession
- iii. Other AT bodies – Proactive support/business opportunity
- iv. Government – IFAC, PAOs, DPs to influence/advocate
- v. Employers – PAOs highlight opportunity/benefits / cost effectiveness of ATs
- vi. Schools & academia – PAOs to promote through marketing, comms (re AT role, as a viable career option and pathway)
- vii. Training Providers – Generous funding
- viii. Development Partners – highlight cost effectiveness of ATs, Capacity building programs,
- ix. Accountancy Firms – stronger cost-effective profession, increased income,
- x. Civil Society / software providers – marketing and comms to increase awareness

CAPA Thoughts

A program of advocacy and influence is required – A Call to Action

- Initial focus has to be internal – the existing profession (globally, regionally and nationally)
- Who will champion? – Existing interested parties, coordinated and capable of leading
- What is needed? – Clear value proposition(s), strongly marketed and communicated to identified stakeholders

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS: SUMMARY

- ✓ A range of stakeholders are necessary to achieve widespread recognition of ATs.
- ✓ Key stakeholders initially are those controlling the profession:
 - Professional bodies - IFAC, regional bodies, PAOs (both AT and Non-AT bodies)
- ✓ When widespread recognition by the profession has been achieved, other stakeholders are needed to embed the recognition, and support adoption and implementation including:
 - Legal bodies – government and regulators (if these are different) to develop and put in place the legal and regulatory frameworks to recognise the AT designation and role as part of the accountancy supply chain
 - Institutional organisations – development partners, standard setters
 - Suppliers (Delivery Partners) – Secondary and Tertiary Institutions, Training Providers
 - The Employment Market – recruiters, accountancy firms (large and SMPs), private (corporates, SMEs) and public sector employers

Forward Program: What next?

1. Scene Setting

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Forward Program

Roundtable 7:
Review and consider
draft output

tbc July

Timing:
08:00 (London),
15:00 (Kuala Lumpur),
17:00 (Sydney)