

Minutes.



Meeting: ACCA UK Practice Sector Panel
Location: Virtual (Teams)
Date: 25 February 2025, 11.00-12.30 GMT

PRESENT

Alex Black, Lee Brocklehurst, Steve Collings, Bethan Evans, Adrian Harris, Peter Jarman, Nick Le Huray, David Nicholls, Situl Raithatha, James Slatter and Gavin Spencer.

APOLOGIES

Carl Reader, Eriona Bajrakurtaj, Riaz Kala, Graham Parker and Aidan Tucker.

IN ATTENDANCE

Glenn Collins (Head of Policy, Technical & Strategic Engagement, ACCA UK), Susan Love (Strategic Engagement Lead, ACCA UK), Sophie Hall (Sectors & Communities Manager, ACCA UK), Laurent Lemaitre (SMP Specialist, ACCA) and Pat Delbridge (Sectors & Communities Manager, ACCA UK).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Panel noted the new panel model was now in operation and thanked the members that had left the panel as a result of reaching their maximum terms or co-options ending. The Panel also noted the term lengths that had been allocated to each member to bring them back into a retirement by rotation schedule. David Nicholls agreed to be the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2. MINUTES

The panel noted the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2024. Those minutes had mentioned the 2025 practising certificate renewal process, and all panel members reported experiencing problems with the process themselves, as well as receiving feedback from other practitioners within their networks about how difficult the process was and delays in receiving their 2025 certificates. It has caused significant stress as practitioners were not sure that they had successfully submitted applications, and they did not receive any responses to queries from ACCA. The Panel welcomed the apology from the ACCA staff present over the difficulties experienced by practitioners.

3. MEMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The panel noted the notes from the December meeting of ACCA UK's Member Advisory Committee which is made up of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the UK sector panels and UK representatives of the International Assembly.

4. ACCA STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

Susan Love (Strategic Engagement Lead for Scotland) discussed the work of ACCA UK's Strategic Engagement team over the past quarter as well as upcoming work:

- ACCA has put in initial comments to the UK Government on the Spending Review which is expected in June.
- The UK Government is consulting on a new trade strategy, a new industrial strategy and a small business strategy.
- HMRC issues continue to be high profile – particularly MTD.
- ACCA continues to work closely with the Small Business Commissioners Office on late payment issues and a new payment code was published recently.
- Issues coming up that will require member input include a study on the SME audit market in the UK, and a [Government consultation on e-invoicing](#) - what the framework for e-invoicing should be in the UK and whether it should be a stronger mandatory framework. A request for input will be circulated to the Panel in due course.
- On the research front, the new Global Talent Trends report will be published in May in time for Accountex, and a separate piece on revisiting career pathways in accountancy is underway.

5. AI AND PRACTITIONERS

The Panel discussed the Flexible AI Upskilling Fund Pilot which was poorly run, and the funding was not fully used up. Applications that were successful were those written by approved AI learning providers on behalf of the businesses that were to be funded. The training on offer did not meet the needs of some panel members.

Glenn Collins discussed his work within the Professional Conduct in Relation to Tax (PCRT) AI stream which is looking at the risks that tax practitioners face if they or their clients use AI as a source of information.

6. SUPPORT FOR PRACTITIONERS

Accounting Futures online summit

The Panel noted that a virtual version of the autumn Accounting Futures roadshow will take place on 27 February from 10am-3pm. This will again cover people, processes, technology and sustainability. You can register [here](#).

Webinar with HMRC

The Panel noted that a webinar with HMRC Programme Director for MTD Craig Ogilvie will take place on 6 March on the latest developments with MTD and HMRC's open pilot scheme. You can register [here](#).

Risk webinars with Lockton

The Panel noted that ACCA will be running two webinars with Lockton – ACCA's recommended broker for PII – on the risk to your insurance cover presented by engagement letters (19 March) and anti-money laundering (7 April). You can [register here](#).

Guidance and resources to grow/scale your practice

The Panel highlighted the difference between growing a practice and scaling a practice. Growth is about building income which can be done in a number of ways, but scaling requires you to have proper systems and processes. Getting the right people is vital and the use of outsourcing is being discussed at length in the profession including how it can be managed.

Technical webinar series – Spring series

The Panel noted that ACCA UK's annual free technical webinar series will run again in 2025 with the Spring series taking place between April and June. Topic suggestions would be welcome.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Panel noted that the next meeting will be a virtual meeting taking place on 20 May at 11.00am.