

The Flying Start Degree Programme

Why should I apply to this degree programme?

This is an extremely innovative degree offering a traditional university experience but with the **knowledge of a graduate job opportunity before you graduate.**

Key features include:

- Paid, progressive work placements with PwC, the world's leading professional services firm. Following completion of the first year, placements are integrated into the degree programme throughout, yet allow completion of the degree within the normal 4-year timescale of traditional placement degree programmes.
- Credit for prior learning in respect of all Professional Stage papers of the examinations of the Institute for Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) ACA qualification.
- The expectation of a full-time position with PwC on graduation at a higher starting salary than other graduate joiners and the prospect of full completion of the ACA accountancy qualification within a year.
- Flexibility at every stage to transfer to other degree programmes.

How is this degree different from accounting degrees offered by most other universities?

- Much wider credit for prior learning with respect to professional qualifications.
- Integrated work placements.
- A business and management orientation rather than economics and finance.
- Extensive case study applications in the final year that prepare you for 'advanced stage' ACA papers, rather than a dissertation.
- An emphasis on ethical behaviour and the wider understanding of ethics in business and society.



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Placements

Can you give me more details of the work placements?

The programme includes **three paid progressive work placements** in years 2, 3 and 4 of the degree programme. Placements in years 2 and 3 are four months, covering the period December - March. The placement in year 4 is slightly longer running from mid-November to end March and involves higher levels of responsibility.

How much will I be paid? Will I be paid for the full year?

For placements 1 & 2 you will be paid the equivalent of the graduate starting salary at the office location which you will be based. As your experience and level of responsibility increases, your salary will also increase. Over the course of the three placements **you can expect to earn at least £20,000**. PwC will pay you for your work placement period only.

What will I do on placement?

Joining PwC's Assurance team, you will work on projects for organisations from PwC's prestigious client list. Wherever you are based, the nature of an audit means that travel will be involved throughout your placement. **This could mean spending time in a number of different cities across the UK.**

Where will they be? Am I able to choose which PwC office I work in?

It is expected that you will be allocated to a placement office by January of the first year of your degree programme. **Your preferences and your personal circumstances will be taken into account** in determining your office location, though we cannot guarantee that all students will be allocated their first choice location.

Can I change offices between placements?

You will spend **all 3 placements based in the same location** to allow you to build a network of contacts and to consolidate on your learning experience.

Professional accreditation

Will I be a qualified accountant by the time I have completed the degree?

Successful completion of this degree programme will allow you to **claim credit for prior learning for 12 professional stage papers of the examinations of the Institute for Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) ACA qualification**. This will leave you with only three further advanced stage papers to complete.

Will I be able to work in a different area of the business?

This degree programme is designed specially to undertake placements within the assurance area of the business. Once you have fully qualified, a secondment or permanent transfer into a different area of the firm may be available, should this be appropriate for your personal development.

Can I work abroad?

Whilst you are on placement through your degree programme you will be **based in the UK**. Once you have fully qualified there will be opportunities for you to apply for a secondment to a different country within the PwC Global Network should this be appropriate for your personal development.

Where will I live when I am on placement?

For those students based at offices within easy commuting distance of Reading, it will be possible to remain in your university accommodation. You may be based at an office close to your family home and therefore will be able to reside there if appropriate. **Should it be necessary for you to rent accommodation in addition to your university residence, PwC will meet the costs of this.** While on placement you may well be required to work with clients based away from your office location. You will be provided with hotel accommodation for the duration of such client assignments.

What happens if I require a work permit?

During your placement **you will not be required to apply for a further work permit**. Your student work permit will sufficiently cover this requirement. Upon joining the firm as a graduate you would be required to gain a work permit and PwC will assist this application process on your behalf.

Am I guaranteed a job with PwC at the end of the degree programme?

Providing you successfully graduate from the degree with a 2.1 degree classification or above then **you can expect to receive a graduate job offer from PwC**.

Your placements will also contribute towards more than half the technical work experience that the ICAEW require as part of the ACA qualification. By the time you graduate you will therefore be approximately **one year away from achieving full ACA chartered accountant status**.

See **further information** on the ICAEW and professional qualifications.

What will I be studying on this degree programme?

Year 1 introduces you to a range of business and accounting modules nearly all of which contribute to the Professional Stage examinations of the ICAEW.

Years 2 and 3 focus on the technical and professional aspects of the Professional Stage at a higher level of knowledge and application.

Year 4 provides a broader, critical academic perspective to your studies along with the opportunity to apply much of your previous study to a variety of case study scenarios that both complete the Professional Stage examinations of the ICAEW and are also a preparation for the final stage of the ICAEW qualification that you will take after graduation.

See **programme content** for a full list of modules complete as part of this degree programme.

How does this all fit into the academic year?

We have carefully planned for the demands of this degree programme. The **first year** follows our usual academic timetable of three 10 week teaching terms.

In **years 2 and 3** you will attend university for the autumn term. You will then join PwC for your work placements from December to March. During this time academic staff will remain in contact with you to support your placements and to help you maintain and academic focus. You then return to the University for the summer term. There will be teaching for the first half of this term followed by examinations, some of which will be ICAEW set professional examinations.

In **year 4** you will start earlier than usual in September with your work placement running from November to March. You will again return in the summer term for further teaching and examinations.

What happens if, at any stage, I find that this degree programme is not for me?

We have arranged our programmes so that at any stage you can transfer either to our directly recruited BA Accounting and Management degree programme or our BA Accounting Studies programme and still graduate within your original 4-year period and with a degree giving a range of credit for prior learning from the ICAEW Professional Stage qualification, depending on your module choices. It may also be possible to **transfer** to our BA Business and Management degree.

Application and selection

What type of candidate is likely to be successful in gaining an offer of a place?

This is an **academically demanding degree programme** with higher progression requirements for each year of the programme than for our other degree programmes. This is so you meet the requirements for ICAEW credit for prior learning.

As a result we will need evidence of your ability to meet these demands so would expect you to have met, or be on target to meet, our academic requirements, which are the **equivalent of AAB at A Level**. However, your career motivations and **evidence of potential professional skills and competencies** will be equally as important.

Successful applicants will also be able to display knowledge and understanding of the professional services sector and the types of careers available. They will be able to display evidence of a number of personal competencies considered essential to a successful career in this sector, including being pro-active and curious; being able to manage projects; being able to lead and to contribute to team success, as well as having general business awareness.

How do I apply?

Step 1

As for all other degree programmes, you would **apply by completing the standard UCAS application form** specifying BA Accounting and Business (NN41) at the University of Reading as one of your choices.

Step 2

If it appears from your UCAS application that you are likely to meet our admissions requirements you will be asked to complete a supplementary application form specifically tailored to applying for this degree programme. You will need to complete the form and return it to us.

Step 3

If, on the basis of your completed supplementary application form, we think you will be well suited to this programme you will be invited to attend an Open Day/Assessment Centre. If you are successful here you will be formally notified of an offer through the UCAS system.

What happens at the Assessment Centres?

You can expect to partake in two assessment activities:

1. You will undertake a one-to-one interview with a member of the academic team at the University of Reading or a PwC Manager. This interview will usually last 45 minutes and will cover a number of competency based questions.
2. You will also be assessed in a group discussion scenario. You cannot prepare for this activity and you will be given a full briefing when you arrive. This activity usually last no more than 1 hour.

This will also be an opportunity for you to explore the campus, investigate our student accommodation and learning facilities and talk to staff and current students.

What if I am not successful in gaining an offer of a place on this degree programme?

As your UCAS application would indicate that you will meet our academic requirements you **may still receive an offer on our BA Accounting and Management degree programme**. This programme offers a range of credits for prior learning from a number of accountancy professional bodies that come close to matching those from the BA Accounting and Business degree programme.

There will also be an opportunity to apply to transfer to the BA Accounting and Business degree at the end of your first year on the BA Accounting and Management. Such transfers would remain conditional on (i) your having taken matching modules during your first year, (ii) successfully meeting the first year progression requirements of the BA Accounting and Business degree, and (iii) being successful at a further assessment day.

I am an international student. Can I also apply?

Yes. Applications are welcome from all those suitably qualified. You would normally have to be available to attend one of the Assessment Centre days at the University of Reading, though it may be possible to arrange for interviews to be conducted via video conference technology.

Tuition fees

What will the fees be for this degree programme?

In year 1, the tuition fee will be the **same as for all other undergraduate degree programmes** at the University of Reading. See **further information** on fees. In years 2, 3 and 4, you will pay 80% of the standard fee.

Will PwC contribute?

No. The **money you will earn while on placement at PwC will help mitigate your programme costs**, but PwC will not contribute towards your tuition fees directly.

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