

Accounting

Accounting is the study of how businesses track their income and assets over time. Accountants engage in a wide variety of activities besides preparing financial statements and recording business transactions including computing costs and efficiency gains from new technologies, participating in strategies for mergers and acquisitions, quality management, developing and using information systems to track financial performance, tax strategy, and health care benefits management.

For current list of career paths please visit:

www.calstatela.edu/univ/cdc/majors/index.html

There's a lot to get out of a job in accounting. Perhaps most important: you will learn how business works. Accounting jobs offer stimulating and challenging work that is constantly evolving. Because accountants spend a lot of time looking under the hoods of businesses, they really learn the nuts and bolts of business. It's no surprise that many successful players in business began their careers in accounting jobs. It's also no surprise that most Chief Financial Officers of large corporations have a background in accounting. An accountant is perfectly positioned to become a CFO because he or she probably has the best understanding of what drives business and profits in a company.

Public Accounting: The central focus of the Big Four [and other public accounting] firms is audit services: the verification of the accuracy of clients' books. This also includes non-audit lines of business, including actuarial work (risk analysis and management), tax consulting, human resources management, and merger and acquisition advice.

In-House Accounting: Whether publicly traded or not, every company has internal accountants to set budgets, manage assets, track payroll, make accounts payable and receivable, and other financial matters. For medium and large firms, the internal staff works closely with the public auditors at the fiscal year-end and with senior management and IT staff year round. Controllers and CFOs at smaller firms often enjoy even more important and influential roles in running and developing the business.

Governmental Accounting: Accounting also has its place at the Federal and State organizational level. The functions performed for the government would be very similar to those in the private industry, the main difference being that the governmental accounting operates on a modified version of accounting standards (GASB). Organizations that deal with sensitive information may also require a certain level of firearm training and or security clearance. The accounting certificate program fulfills requirements for the following SOC coded occupations: accountant, budget analyst, tax examiner/collector/agent/preparer.



Sample Job Titles:

Entry-Level

- Accountant I
- Accounting Analyst
- Junior Accountant
- Accounting Clerk
- Assurance/Tax Professional
- Bookkeeper

Mid-Level

- Senior Accountant
- Accountant II
- Internal Auditor

Pinnacle

- CFO
- Partner
- Senior Manager
- Controller

Skills/Experience Required:

- Mathematical Reasoning
- Problem Solving
- Analytical Skills
- Ability to Communicate Findings or Recommendations
- Basic Knowledge of Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Financial and Managerial Accounting.
- CPA Recommended

Starting Salaries/Trajectory*

BLS 2014 average salary: \$73,670

Note: Salary varies by organizational sector (public, general industry, government)

Professional Associations/Certifications:

- Masters of Business Administration (MBA), Option in Accounting
- BSBA, Option in Accounting
- Accounting Certificate Program
- CalCPA Education Foundation
- American Institute of CPA's (AICPA)
- Accounting Society
- Beta Alpha Psi

**Note: Salaries are highly dependent on location, company type, and candidate experience/education. For the purposes of this guide, we are providing average starting salaries as determined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), overall average salaries as determined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), as well as supplemental information found from various industry-specific sources.*



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CBE Placement Services

Industry Research Tools:

- aicpa.com
- careers-in-accounting.com
- accounting.com

Job and Internship Search Sites:

- efinancialcareers.com
- accountingclassifieds.com
- ihireaccounting.com
- Individual firm websites