

Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA): Alternative Careers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA): Alternative Careers

In Canada, the three accounting designations, CA / CMA / CGA have merged under the **Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA)** designation.

More information:

- **Chartered Professional Accountants British Columbia**
<http://www.bccpa.ca/>

You may find that your international training and experience as an accountant are not immediately accepted in B.C. The analytical and math skills you have already acquired, along with your communication skills and hands-on experience can be used in alternative careers.

Alternative Careers:

Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF) (NOC 1111)

The ACAF is an education program developed by Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada for those wanting to work in accounting and finance, but not as a qualified CPA. You will learn to apply the technical accounting and software skills that employers require in order to work as an intermediate level accounting professional.

Requirements:

- Successfully meeting entry requirements which include completing courses in finance and business typically covered in an accounting diploma program OR three years of relevant work experience
- Completion of ACAF courses offered through a recognized post-secondary institution in BC (generally two to three years of part-time study)
- Successfully completing the ACAF national examination

<https://www.bccpa.ca/become-a-cpa/programs/advanced-certificate-in-accounting-and-finance-ac/>

Financial Sales Representative (NOC 6235)

Also referred to as Loan Officer, Mortgage Consultant, Account Manager

You interview applicants for loans, evaluate applicant's financial status, complete credit and loan applications and submit to management with recommendations for approval or rejection, promote the sale of credit and loan services.

Requirements:

- completion of secondary school and extensive general banking experience is usually required
- a bachelor's degree related to commerce or economics may be required
- completion of a loan or credit training program, ranging from six to twelve months, is usually required

Skills:

- Communication skills
- Math skills
- Computer skills

Wages: median hourly wage \$22.00

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Trust Officer (NOC 1114)

You manage estate, personal, charitable and corporate trusts, direct trust account investments, and distribute trust funds.

Requirements:

- bachelor's degree in business administration, commerce, economics or a related field is usually required
- additional courses may be required from financial organizations such as Institute of Canadian Banking, Canadian Securities Institute, etc

Skills:

- Communication skills
- Detail oriented
- Administration abilities
- Computer skills

Wages: median hourly wage \$29.74

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Mortgage Broker (NOC 1114)

You collect clients' financial information (income, liabilities, assets), research mortgage options, explain options to clients, negotiate mortgage loans with lending institutions, and advise clients when making a decision.

Requirements:

- degree in business administration, commerce, economics or a related field
- mortgage broker licence (www.fic.gov.bc.ca/)

Skills:

- Communication skills
- Detail oriented
- Administration abilities
- Computer skills

Wages: median hourly wage \$29.74

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Bookkeeper (NOC 1311)

Also referred to as Accounting Technician

You track all money coming into and going out of a business; prepare bills and invoices; create budgets and financial reports; prepare tax returns and perform other personal bookkeeping services.

Requirements:

- completion of a college program in accounting, bookkeeping or a related field

OR

- completion of two years (first level) of a recognized professional accounting program

OR

- courses in accounting or bookkeeping combined with several years of experience as a financial or accounting clerk are required

Skills:

- ability to understand and work with numbers
- good communication skills
- strong organizational skills
- must be detail-oriented

Wages: median hourly wage: \$20.00

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

Supervisors, Finance and Insurance Office Workers (NOC 1212)

Also referred to as accounts payable supervisor, accounts receivable supervisor, bookkeeping supervisor, collections supervisor, credit supervisor, payroll supervisor, supervisor of accounting

You create efficient working procedures, co-ordinate and review the work of clerks, train employees, authorize payments, credits and other financial transactions, and prepare and submit reports.

Requirements:

- completion of a college program or courses in bookkeeping, accounting or a related subject
- previous experience in the clerical occupation you are supervising

Skills:

- ability to examine and confirm accuracy of work
- good communication skills
- strong organizational skills
- analytical and results oriented

Wages: median hourly wage: \$26.44

<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>

2. Employment Outlook

Demand for experts in tax, financial instruments, forensic accounting, and bankruptcy is increasing. The demand for accountants specializing in a specific industrial sector may also be on the rise.

Financial Sales Representatives (NOC 6235)

Many job openings are expected in the banking industry in British Columbia. These new jobs focus on building in-depth, value-added customer relationships. In keeping with this trend, banks are recruiting employees with higher education or skill levels.

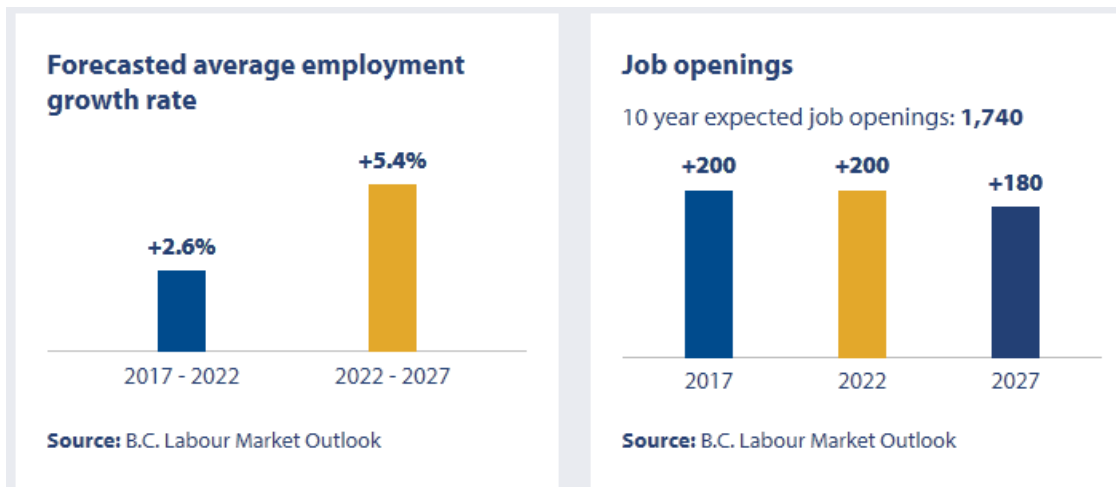


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Other Financial Officers (NOC 1114)

(Including Financial Planners, Financial investigators, Trust Officers, Mortgage Brokers)



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Bookkeepers and Accounting Technicians (NOC 1311)



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Supervisors, Finance and Insurance Office Workers (NOC 1212)



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3. Retraining

You can become certified as a CPA by completing:

- *CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP)*, a two-year graduate-level program that is delivered on a part-time basis

If you do not have a degree from a recognized post-secondary institute you may want to consider completing the *Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF) program*, which allows you to work in intermediate level accounting positions:

- *CPA Advanced Certificate in Accounting and Finance (ACAF)*. The full program takes approximately two to three years of part-time study

For more information on which program is the best for you:

- Become a CPA: <https://www.bccpa.ca/become-a-cpa/programs/>

4. Searching for Jobs

AccountingJobs.ca

www.accountingjobs.ca/

Hays.ca

www.hays.ca/

Robert Half Finance & Accounting

www.roberthalffinance.com/

Indeed.ca

www.indeed.ca/

Neuvoo

<http://neuvoo.ca>

5. Volunteering in the Field

Volunteering can help you to explore a new career and learn more about engineering and technical work in B.C. You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that may lead to information on job openings and an inside connection at a potential employer.

Go Volunteer

<http://govolunteer.ca/>

Volunteer BC

www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/

BC Chartered Professional Accountants

<http://www.bccpa.ca/members/connect/volunteering-with-cpabc/>

6. Helpful Resources

Canadian Bookkeepers Association

<http://www.c-b-a.ca/>

Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia

<http://www.bccpa.ca/>

<https://www.bccpa.ca/become-a-cpa/become-a-cpa/internationally-designated-accountants/> [for internationally educated accounting professionals]

Mortgage Brokers Association of B.C.

www.mbabc.ca/

Mortgage Brokers Institute British Columbia

www.mbibc.ca/

Click on 'Job Search Resources' at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> for help on:

- resumes & cover letters
- getting Canadian work experience
- networking for employment
- online social networks
- Canadian workplace culture

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

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