

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT FOR YOUR ACCOUNTING CAREER

POSSIBLE CAREER PATHS

Often referred to as the language of business, accounting is the development of the financial information necessary for management decisions in both the private and public sectors. Career paths available to students studying accounting include but are not limited to:

- **Audit, tax or consulting firms** of all sizes
- **Public companies** like Amazon, Nordstrom, Starbucks
- **Private companies** like Patagonia or REI
- **Non-profits** like the Gates Foundation or Woodland Park Zoo
- **Government agencies** like the CIA or FBI
- **Universities** like our beloved University of Washington. Go Huskies!
- **Sports entities** like the Seahawks or Sounders
- **Non-accounting positions.** Employers love candidates with accounting skills. Ever been to Orin's Place in Paccar Hall? Orin Smith, former CEO of Starbucks, is a Foster accounting graduate. So is Fran Bigalow, founder of Fran's Chocolates.

WHAT DO ACCOUNTANTS DO?

Accountants record, aggregate, interpret and use financial information to make informed decisions. As such, accountants are often one of the first involved when an important decision needs to be made. Want to be a key part of the decision-making process? Become an accountant.

Some professions in accounting require you to pass a certification exam like the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam. Having a CPA or other certification will immediately elevate you in the eyes of employers. It signals that you are someone with high ethical standards and a valuable, diverse set of skills. If passing the CPA exam is in your future, know that the Foster School's Accounting Program has the highest CPA pass rate in the State of Washington. We have you covered.

Many professions in accounting do not require certifications. In fact, working for many of the companies listed to the left do not require you to be certified. Whether you want to become certified or not, choosing accounting presents many rewarding, well-paying opportunities.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT (CPA) ELIGIBILITY & RESOURCES

- **Public Accounting:** Firms hiring audit or tax requires candidates to achieve a CPA credential. Candidates must have 225 credits to sit for the CPA; meet with an Academic Adviser to learn more.
- **Foster School of Business Master of Professional Accounting and Master of Science in Taxation programs:** Students take classes that prepare them for the opportunities, challenges, and experiences of work in the accounting profession and satisfy the additional credits required to sit for the CPA exam in the State of Washington. Email: mpacc@uw.edu or mstax@uw.edu to learn more.
- **Non-Foster Students:** If you graduate with a non-business degree, you can still study accounting through the University of Washington Certificate in Accounting program.



PUBLIC ACCOUNTING INTERNSHIP RECRUITING PROCESS

JUNIOR YEAR

Junior Class Standing/3rd Year
(90-135 Credits)

- Attend office hours with the firms (posted on Handshake)
- Meet with recruiters early to know when you are eligible to apply for internships. It is common practice to reach out to recruiters and professionals to conduct a coffee chat; meet with a career coach to learn more!

Fall Quarter

- Update your resume and cover letter; schedule an appointment or visit drop-in hours at Foster Career Services for a review session
- Check Handshake and apply to industry Accounting internships for summer

Winter and Spring Quarter

- Attend socials, information sessions, and networking events hosted by public accounting firms
- Apply and interview for internships (summer before final year) with public accounting firms
- Polish your networking skills in preparation for Early Internship Recruiting events

SUMMER

- Attend Early Internship Recruiting events at public accounting firms (some may begin as early as May)
- If possible, participate in a summer internship or experience to build analytical and communication skills
- Attend summer socials with firms

SENIOR YEAR

Senior Class Standing/4th Year
(135+ Credits)

September

- Check Handshake for internship postings, events, info sessions, and office hours
- Get resume/cover letter reviewed, and sit down for mock interviews with Foster Career Services
- Apply for summer internship opportunities (summer before final year)

October

- **Meet the Firms:** Network and meet professionals from different firms at this annual event hosted by Beta Alpha Psi (open to all students)
- **First-Round Interviews:** On-campus or virtual interviews help both the firms and candidates determine a good fit

November

- **Second-Round Interviews:** Includes firm visits and several interviews over the course of a day
- Offers and student decisions made

SUMMER BEFORE FINAL YEAR


- If possible, participate in a summer internship with public accounting firms
- Network with professionals at the firm and continue to communicate with the recruiter
- Students may receive full-time offers from firms

What is an Early Internship Recruiting? (also known as Summer Leadership)

- Early Internship Recruiting (EIR) offer students an inside look at individual firms and lines of service through hands-on activities
- Students are encouraged to research and attend as many as possible at a variety of different firms
- Offers for Internships (summer before final year) may be extended contingent on your participation in a firm's recruiting events; **timing and hiring processes vary at each firm**

Important Things to Remember

- Naming conventions for lines of service vary for each firm, refer to internship postings for more information
- Use Handshake to learn about different information sessions, socials, and events! There will also be important information on how to dress and what to prepare
- The interview does not end until you sign an offer. Maintain professionalism during all interactions with the firm because they are always evaluating you, this includes social events
- Meet with a career coach to successfully navigate the internship or job offer, communication with firms, and any other questions about the recruiting process

- To schedule an appointment, visit Handshake 

**Note: Not all firms have early internship recruiting or early internship deadlines, which is why it is important to network throughout the year.*

