

# The qualification that makes a difference

The CIPFA Professional  
Accountancy Qualification



# What is public service finance?

Public services are designed for the benefit of society. In the UK, this includes local and central government, education, charities, along with the police, military and the NHS. These services are supported by public money which needs to be managed efficiently and transparently. A career in public service finance enables you to play a central role in changing lives and securing the wellbeing of society.

14,000  
members

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4,000  
students

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3,400  
organisations employ  
CIPFA members

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## Who is CIPFA?

CIPFA is the professional body for people in public service finance – the only accountancy body in the world exclusively dedicated to the sector.

We champion the performance of public services globally and help to develop and promote careers in public sector financial management.

Our internationally recognised qualifications, training and learning solutions are widely considered as standard-setting and industry-defining.

From the moment you start the CIPFA Professional Accountancy Qualification you become a member of CIPFA. Our members lead the way in public financial management and are at the heart of everything we do.

As a CIPFA student, you'll have our full support throughout your studies and your career. Through exclusive events, accredited courses, e-learning and much more, we'll give you the guidance, skills and knowledge that you need to support your continued professional development.

# The CIPFA professional accountancy qualification

If you want to become an expert in public service finance, the best place to start is by studying the CIPFA PQ (Professional Accountancy Qualification), the only specialist qualification for the sector.

Thanks to our partnerships with employers across the country we offer trainee schemes meaning you can earn a salary, accelerate your career and get full sponsorship to study the CIPFA PQ at the same time. For more information visit [www.cipfa.org/tv](http://www.cipfa.org/tv)

## Entry requirements

CIPFA does not require you to have a degree in accountancy to study our qualification. Some trainee schemes stipulate that you must be a graduate (in a range of disciplines), while others have their own alternative entry requirements. To be eligible for any trainee scheme, you need to be able to work in the UK/EU without the need for visa sponsorship.

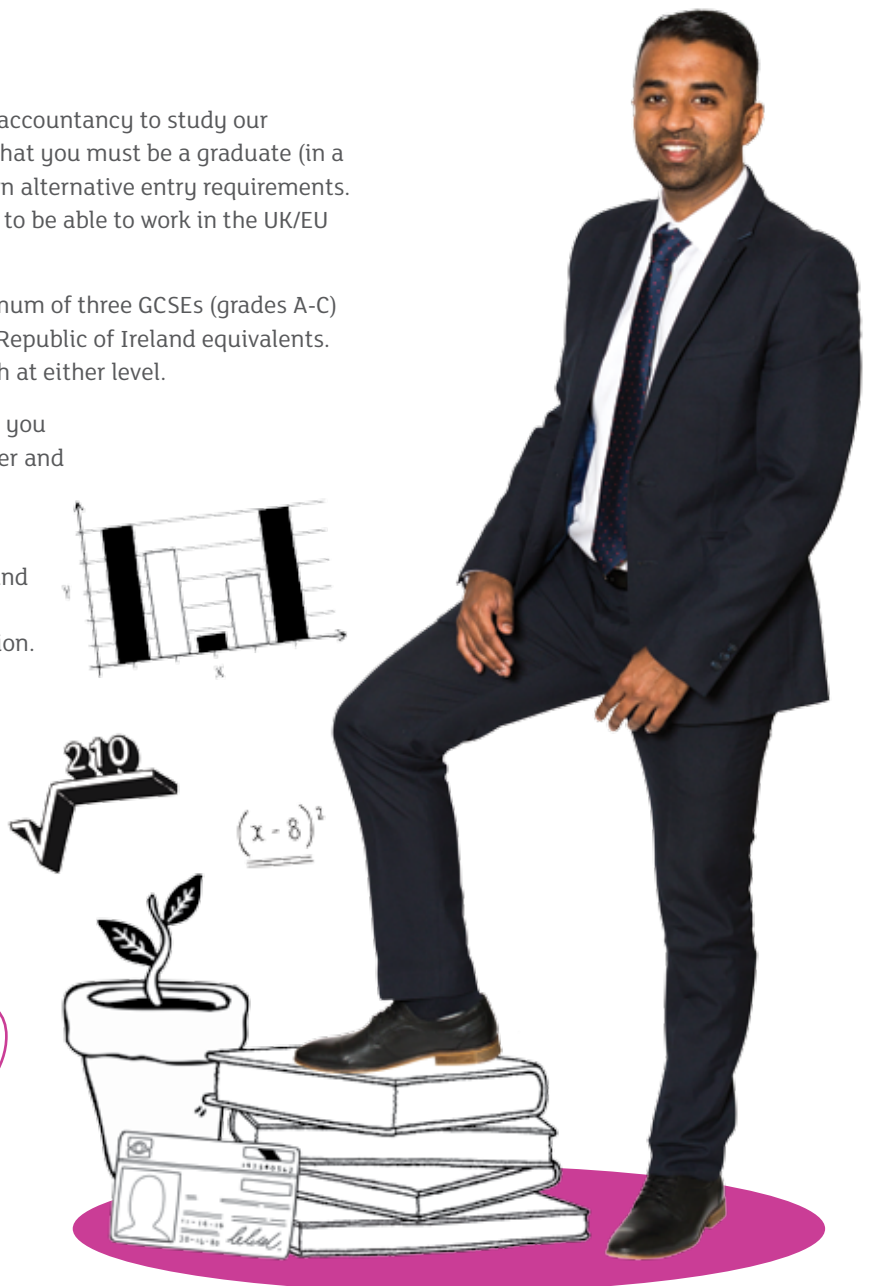
You can study the CIPFA PQ if you have a minimum of three GCSEs (grades A-C) and two A-levels (grade A-C), or the Scottish or Republic of Ireland equivalents. Subjects must include Mathematics and English at either level.

If you do not meet the academic requirements, you can become a CIPFA student if you are 21 or over and have over three years' relevant work experience and the support of your employer.

We also offer specific entry routes for AAT, IIA and CCAB qualified individuals. Visit [www.cipfa.org](http://www.cipfa.org) or call **+44 (0)20 7543 5600** for more information.

My key motivator was to serve the local community and the CIPFA qualification is the gateway to achieving success in the public service finance arena.

**Aziz Ali**  
Business Accountant,  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets



# Why start with CIPFA and our qualification?

1

## Enjoy better value for money

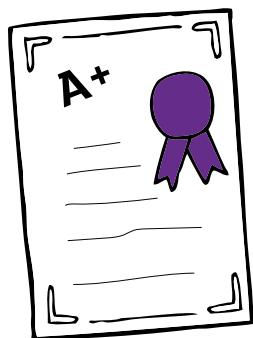
Our qualification will cost you and your employer less to complete than ACCA and CIMA.\*



4

## Be qualified in a growing market

The biggest growth in vacancies in 2015 was amongst public sector employers (2005 to 2015 vacancies have increased by 105%\*\*\*).



2

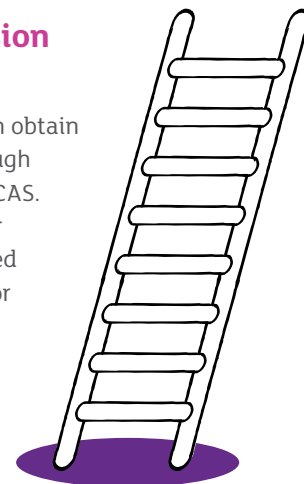
## Look forward to better results

Our students earn higher final level pass rates than ACCA and CIMA.\*\*

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## Career progression and portability

Once qualified you can obtain dual designation through our partnership with ICAS. This will reinforce your status as a multi-skilled finance professional for both the public and corporate sector.

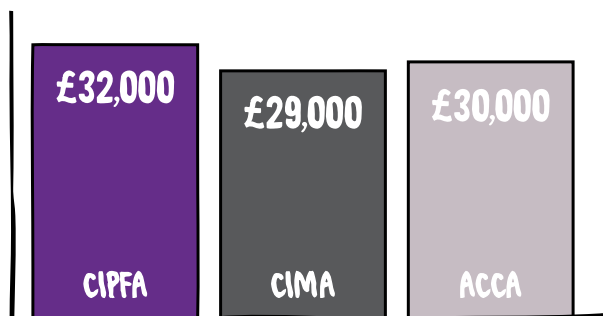


3

## Earn a competitive salary



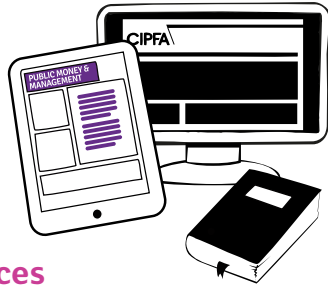
AVERAGE OPERATIONAL LEVEL SALARIES AFTER QUALIFICATION\*



# 6

## Benefit from a wealth of resources

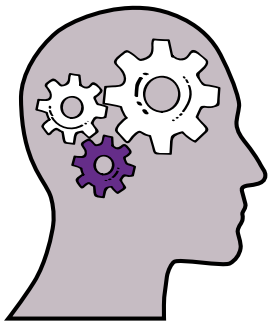
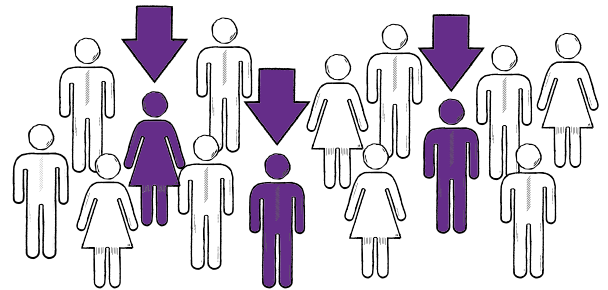
Once you become a CIPFA member you will gain access to our breadth of continuing professional development tools and knowledge. See page 8 for more member benefits, including exclusive access to professional networks.



# 9

## Get increased recognition

As a qualified CIPFA member you are entitled to use the designation CPFA – Chartered Public Finance Accountant. This is globally recognised and will help you to stand out throughout your career.



# 7

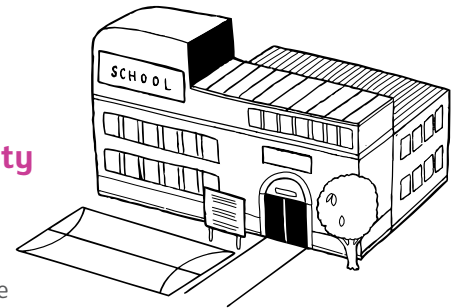
## Learn from a wealth of experience

All our specialist teaching staff have real experience from the public and corporate sector.

# 10

## Shape society from the inside out

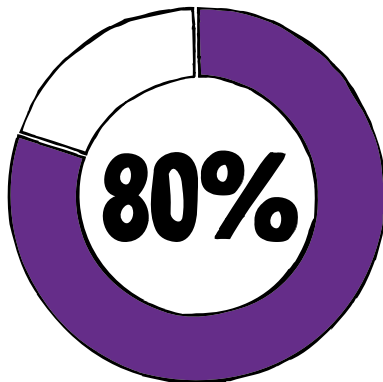
Play a central role in ensuring that public money is efficiently raised and spent; supporting critical services, transforming communities and changing lives.



# 8

## Job satisfaction

80% of our members choose to stay in public services after qualifying.



\* Source: Working in Accountancy 2014

\*\* Source: FRC, Professional Oversight Board Key Facts and Trends 2013

\*\*\* Source: The Graduate Market 2014

# Study options

## CIPFA Learning – flexible study options for our students

CIPFA Learning offers an integrated suite of interactive teaching and learning tools – giving you more flexibility and convenience with your CIPFA PQ studies.

With CIPFA Learning you can access much of your learning online, from workbooks, live and on demand web classes and video clips, to discussion forums, revision and assessment materials.

You can choose any of the following study options, or a blend of all three to study in the way that best suits you:

- Face-to-face
- Web class
- Self-study

## Online examinations

All our examinations are undertaken online. This removes the need to travel to an examination centre and gives you the flexibility to sit exams at home or work, anywhere in the world.

CIPFA stands out from the other accountancy bodies as it encompasses that little something extra. The syllabus is completely relevant with what is going on in the public sector landscape.

**Shaer Halewood**  
Assistant Director of Finance,  
Oldham Council



# CIPFA PQ syllabus

<b>STRATEGIC LEVEL</b> Leader	<b>FULL CHARTERED PUBLIC FINANCE ACCOUNTANT (CPFA) STATUS</b>	
	<b>Strategic Public Finance ● ★</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sources of public finance</li> <li>■ Service integration strategies</li> <li>■ Finance leadership</li> <li>■ Performance evaluation</li> <li>■ Business cases</li> </ul>	<b>Strategic Case Study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Critical evaluation</li> <li>■ Decision making</li> <li>■ Integration</li> <li>■ Leadership</li> <li>■ Professional judgement</li> </ul>
	<b>ASSOCIATE MEMBER</b>	
<b>PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA</b> Enabler and Innovator Business Partner	<b>Public Service Financial Reporting ● ★</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Financial reporting frameworks</li> <li>■ Public services financial statements</li> <li>■ Consolidated accounts</li> <li>■ Interpreting financial statements</li> </ul>	<b>Business and Change Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Commissioning</li> <li>■ Contract management</li> <li>■ Project management</li> <li>■ Change implementation</li> </ul>
	<b>Taxation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Corporation Tax</li> <li>■ VAT</li> <li>■ Income taxes</li> <li>■ Local taxation</li> </ul>	<b>Strategy and Policy Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>■ Competitive advantage</li> <li>■ Collaboration strategies</li> <li>■ Organisational configuration</li> </ul>
<b>PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE</b> Steward	<b>Corporate Governance and Law</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Corporate governance</li> <li>■ UK legal systems</li> <li>■ Business law</li> <li>■ Public administration law</li> </ul>	<b>Financial Management ★</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sources of finance</li> <li>■ Treasury management</li> <li>■ Capital project appraisal</li> <li>■ Working capital management</li> </ul>
	<b>AFFILIATE MEMBER</b>	
	<b>Financial Accounting ▲</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Professional ethics</li> <li>■ Accounting concepts</li> <li>■ Double-entry bookkeeping</li> <li>■ Introductory financial statements</li> </ul>	<b>Company Financial Reporting ▲</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ IFRS application</li> <li>■ Financial statements preparation</li> <li>■ Group accounts</li> <li>■ Interpreting financial statements</li> </ul>
<b>Management Accounting ▲</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Management information</li> <li>■ Costing methods</li> <li>■ Costing applications</li> <li>■ Budgeting</li> </ul>	<b>Audit and Assurance ▲</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Risk assessment</li> <li>■ Audit testing</li> <li>■ Audit evidence</li> <li>■ External and internal audit</li> </ul>	
<b>EXEMPTIONS</b>		
<b>AAT Level 4 Members</b> Exempt from ▲ (subject to conditions)	<b>Qualified Accountants</b> Need to take just two modules ●	<b>IIA Members</b> Only need to take three modules ★

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

## The CPFA to CA Top Up

Once qualified you have the opportunity to top-up your qualification through the ICAS Pathways route, adding Chartered Accountant (CA) to your professional recognition and becoming a joint member of CIPFA and ICAS.

# Member benefits

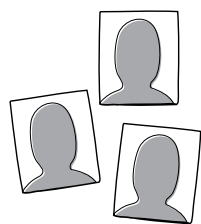
Once qualified your career journey doesn't stop, we provide Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to support you in becoming a finance leader.

## Chartered Public Finance Accountant 'CPFA'

Add the widely respected designatory letters after your name.

## The CPFA to CA Top Up

Extend your professional reach – obtain dual designation through the ICAS Pathways route.

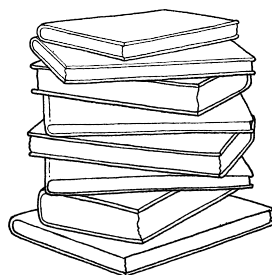


## Network with top finance professionals

Join the leading network of global public finance practitioners and connect to share information and experience.

## Expert publications

Access the latest knowledge, opinion and technical news.



## Online resources

Free access to over 12,000 CPD resources including videos, checklists, e-journals and e-books.

## Exclusive discounts

We've negotiated discounts for professional, social and lifestyle items.



## Events and training

Members receive one free open training course and can access regular regional CPD events.



CIPFA is a fantastic source of support and guidance. Members have access to online learning resources such as newsletters, publications and journals, as well as access to a large national network of fellow professionals. As a result I feel I have my finger firmly on the pulse of public service finance.

**Ranjit Solomon**, Senior Finance Manager, Public Health England



# What our past students say...



**Neil Sartorio**  
Partner – Lead for England & Wales,  
Local Public Services (LPS)

“The CIPFA Professional Qualification was vital in giving me a detailed understanding of how public services work. It helped me to recognise the challenges facing the sector and learn to translate these into solutions that protect and enhance the outcomes.”



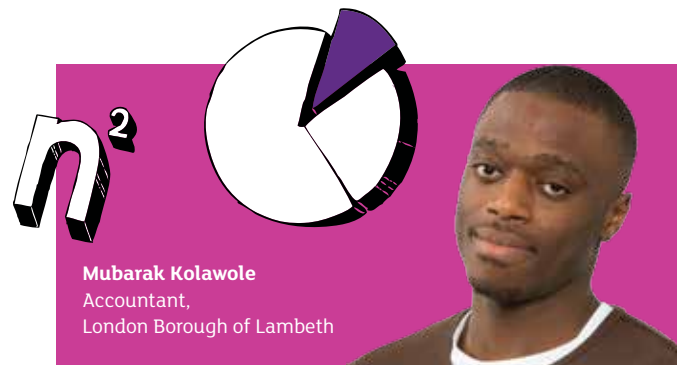
**Rachel Redman**  
Finance Officer,  
Cheshire West & Chester Council

“Working in public sector finance is challenging, varied and exciting, and CIPFA has given me a fantastic grounding. Having the CIPFA qualification has given me vital skills to go further in my career than if I’d chosen an alternative qualification.”



**Ruth Hodson**  
Strategic Business Partner,  
Metropolitan Police Service

“The CIPFA qualification has opened doors to interviews and opportunities that I wouldn’t have had otherwise. Working in the public sector was the first time I had a role that directly affected peoples’ lives and I was hooked.”



**Mubarak Kolawole**  
Accountant,  
London Borough of Lambeth

“As well as core finance and accountancy skills, I also saw improvements in my analytical skills, my understanding of ethics, and how they apply to public services, and my knowledge of fundamental management techniques.”

# Why CIPFA is the preferred choice for employers

CIPFA is a long-established and well-respected body. We are the preferred choice for organisations looking for a highly-skilled and highly motivated workforce that can shape the future of public service provision.

Our professional accountancy qualification is the only one of its kind and equips you with the wide range of **technical, behavioural and commercial skills** expected of a modern public finance professional.

## Other employer benefits:

- Our qualification reflects the **latest standards, policies and challenges** in modern public services.
- You'll be armed with a broad set of transferable business skills, including business strategy, financial and management accounting, **audit, tax, leadership and ethics**.
- Through the ICAS Pathways route, you can learn to leverage private sector expertise. This will ensure you are on top of an increasingly commercial agenda in public service provision.
- **Flexible study options**, such as our online exams and webinars, mean that you spend less time away from the office.
- A dedicated **employer relations** team offering extensive support.
- Exclusive access to public sector-specific **technical resources**.

CIPFA creates experts who manage multimillion pound budgets effectively and innovatively. Redefining the notion that accountants are just boring bean counters, they develop dynamic leaders that make a real difference for our residents and businesses.

**Paul Clarke**  
Strategic Finance Manager,  
Westminster City Council



**Lulu Yang**  
Accountant –  
Financial Planning  
& Management,  
London Borough  
of Lambeth

# Next steps

For more information about the **CIPFA Professional Accountancy Qualification** – including flexible study options, case studies and the answers to frequently asked questions visit [www.cipfa/pq](http://www.cipfa/pq)

To view the latest training opportunities and sign up for email alerts visit [www.cipfa/tv](http://www.cipfa/tv)

To find out more about studying the CIPFA PQ through our accountancy apprenticeships visit [www.cipfa.org/apprenticeships](http://www.cipfa.org/apprenticeships)

Contact one of our student advisers to discuss your circumstances and requirements:

**T: + 44 (0)20 7543 5600**

**E: [students@cipfa.org](mailto:students@cipfa.org)**



CIPFA



@CIPFAfutures

Public services affect how we all live, they influence our life chances and our wellbeing from the day we are born. I wanted to play a part in making those services as good as they can be. There's huge responsibility that comes with managing public money but also a massive opportunity to make a difference.

**Lisa Commane**, Assistant Director ICT Transformation and Customer Services, Coventry City Council



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[www.cipfa.org](http://www.cipfa.org)

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