



To: Assignment/News/Business Section Editor

Accounting Technicians Qualification Revamped

New Generation of AATs to support accountants and finance professionals

(Hong Kong, 18 September 2008) – Hong Kong Institute of CPAs announced today the revamp of its accounting technician qualification with a new syllabus taking effect in mid 2009. The majority of 63,000 accounting personnels providing clerical accounting services, and students from a bevy of educational and vocational backgrounds pursuing a career in accounting, will have the opportunity to access this newly positioned AAT or Accredited Accounting Technicians qualification.

The Hong Kong Institute of Accounting Technicians, the accrediting body for accounting technicians and a subsidiary of the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs has been administering the AAT qualification since its establishment in 1988. More than 8,000 graduates have attained the AAT qualification with another 6,000 currently being trained.

AATs or accredited accounting technicians are experts in the mechanics of accounting and have the clerical accounting capabilities to support CPAs and finance professionals. Among other duties, accounting technicians' work includes: preparing simple accounts, providing clerical accounting, and book-keeping support for business entities and organizations of all sizes.

“Business in Hong Kong and the mainland have become increasingly sophisticated and globalized with complicated business transactions and standards. Conventional accounting functions have also been taken up by advanced technology,” says Johnson Kong, director at BDO McCabe Lo Ltd. “The new generation of accounting technicians will need to have a broader perspective of the world economy and business operations, a savvier know-how of accounting software and new technology, and a deeper understanding of business and commerce.”

“This is where the new syllabus becomes more valuable for the accounting profession and business in general, especially with the boom in demand for all kinds of accounting services,” says Winnie C.W. Cheung, chief executive and registrar of Hong Kong Institute of CPAs. “The restructured and upgraded AAT training introduces new subjects and skill-sets, including business economics, financial mathematics, organization and management, and management information systems.”

Similar to the vigorous ethical requirements of CPAs, the AAT qualification framework introduces a capstone professional assessment which aims to develop AATs' values and ability to demonstrate professionalism.

"The professional assessment is a unique value of AAT qualification, setting it apart from others in the market," says Cheung. "The revamped AAT training builds the competency and integrity elements at the accounting technicians level so that we can have a strong accounting profession at all levels."

As an employer of accounting technicians, Kong welcomes the new syllabus and says it is a healthy development for Hong Kong's employers. "The new syllabus of the AAT qualification is specially tailored for Hong Kong's unique business market. It is practical, stimulating and meshes well with hands-on experience in the field."

"Behind every successful certified public accountant is a team of strong accounting technicians," adds Kong.

- End -

About the Hong Kong Institute of CPAs

The Hong Kong Institute of CPAs is the only body authorized by law to register and grant practising certificates to certified public accountants in Hong Kong. The Institute has more than 27,000 members and 12,000 registered students. Members of the Institute are entitled to the description *certified public accountant* and to the designatory letters *CPA*.

The Hong Kong Institute of CPAs evolved from the Hong Kong Society of Accountants, which was established on 1 January 1973.

The Institute operates under the Professional Accountants Ordinance and works in the public interest. The Institute has wide-ranging responsibilities, including assuring the quality of entry into the profession through its postgraduate CPA qualification programme and promulgating financial reporting, auditing and ethical standards in Hong Kong. The Institute has responsibility for regulating and promoting efficient accounting practices in Hong Kong to safeguard its leadership as an international financial centre.

The Hong Kong Institute of CPAs is a member of The Global Accounting Alliance - an alliance of the world's leading professional accountancy bodies, which was formed in 2005. The GAA promotes quality services, collaborates on important international issues and works with national regulators, governments and stakeholders.

Hong Kong Institute of CPA's contact information:

Stella To
Deputy Director, Communications
Phone: 2287 7209
Mobile: 9027 7323
Email: stella@hkicpa.org.hk