

# Accounting Technician Competition Handbook



## Contents:

Kaplan Overview .....	Page 3 & 4
Accounting Profession and Qualifications .....	Page 5 & 6
WorldSkills UK Information and Resources .....	Page 7
WorldSkills UK Registration .....	Page 7
Competition Entry Criteria .....	Page 7
Accounting Technician Competition Structure .....	Pages 8 & 9
WorldSkills UK National Qualifiers: Task and specification .....	Pages 10 & 11
WorldSkills UK Live National Final: Task and specification .....	Pages 12 & 13
WorldSkills UK Live National Final what to expect .....	Page 14
Judges "Top Tips" .....	Page 15
Competition Rules .....	Page 16
Beyond WorldSkills UK Live National Finals .....	Page 16
Contact us .....	Page 17

## **Kaplan Overview:**

### **Who we are:**

The success of every learner is at the heart of Kaplan. It drives everything we do. It's simply why we exist in the world. Working as one team, we all help to inspire our learners to succeed.

For almost 80 years, we've helped shape the development and careers of finance professionals. We operate in over 30 countries, with strong links to the US, and have become one of the leading education providers in the world. We've worked with over 3 million individuals and businesses across the globe.

### **Our values – what we believe in:**

- act with integrity:
  - we hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards in everything we do
- grow knowledge:
  - we offer expert resources to help you achieve your academic and career best
- empower and support:
  - we give you the tools you need to succeed
- create opportunity:
  - we open doors and broaden access to education
- drive results together:
  - we're dedicated to helping you achieve your goals – we succeed when you succeed.

### **Kaplan Apprenticeships:**

Kaplan are one of the largest Apprenticeship training providers in the UK. We train over 10,000 apprentices every year, and 75 of the FTSE 100 companies use us for training. We have a team of over 200 qualified and expert tutors to deliver top rated courses around the country.

We are also top rated by apprentices - rated 8th out of 300 Apprenticeship providers on Rate My Apprenticeship. We offer a large choice of Apprenticeships and specialise in Accountancy and Tax, Financial Services, Data and IT.

**Kaplan and WorldSkills UK:**

Kaplan partnered with WorldSkills UK for the 2021 national apprenticeship competition cycle to officially launch the accountancy technician skills competition and is pleased to do so again in 2022. Our apprenticeship intent includes meeting skills needs and increasing UK productivity: WorldSkills UK is a natural fit therefore for what we aim to achieve.

This team competition, which is aimed at apprentices, is designed to reflect the role of an accountant and demonstrate the standards that are expected in the world of finance.

We know that there are incredibly talented accounting and finance apprentices and students at Kaplan and other providers throughout the UK, so this is a perfect opportunity to challenge your skill set, meet peers and share knowledge.

This guide will provide you with a clear path to follow, from the initial registration to the national finals and beyond.

## Accounting Profession and Qualifications

### Overview:

Accountancy is the process of communicating information about the financial state of an organisation to its stakeholders, usually in the form of financial statements. The broader skill set requires the individual to analyse, interpret and propose solutions to business related problems. Increasingly there is a need to understand and harness the data produced by an organisation in order to drive and manage change.

This competition has been designed to reflect the role of an accountant and the standards that are expected within the financial sector. The competition will take the format of a set business case study with accompanying tasks and assessments to be undertaken in the given time period.

### Demonstrable Skills:

- maths skills
- critical thinking
- teamwork
- effective communication
- commercial acumen
- problem solving
- strong IT skills
- customer service skills.

### Qualifications:

There are plenty of routes into accountancy, such as AAT, ACCA, CIMA, ICAEW and many other learning pathways. If you are interested in the accounting technician competition, the likelihood is that you are already studying one as part of your apprenticeship. Within accountancy there are numerous career pathways to explore, with skills applicable to a huge array of industries and businesses.

[This handy infographic](#) displays just some of the trajectories your accountancy career can take you, including average salaries and what qualifications to study next. We've also included the links to Kaplan's qualifications page, as well as the major accounting awarding bodies for further info:

- [Kaplan Accounting Qualifications](#)

- **Kaplan Apprenticeships**
- **AAT**
- **ACCA**
- **CIMA**
- **ICAEW**

## WorldSkills UK Information and Resources

### Overview:

WorldSkills UK has a wealth of information, guidance and resources on its website aimed at helping learners, educators and employers. Please see some of these relevant links below:

- [Skills Development Hub](#)
- [Careers Advice Toolkit](#)
- [Centre of Excellence](#)

## WorldSkills UK Registration

### Overview:

For general information and resources on the WorldSkills 2022 competition cycle, including how to register, competition rules, and the steps to competing, visit the [following link](#).

To view the accounting technician landing page, visit [this link](#).

## Competition Entry Criteria

- this competition is intended for those studying, training and/or working in the finance sector. As such, competitors must be familiar with the core competencies listed in this handbook, and meet at least one of the following criteria: undertaking a Level 3 apprenticeship or higher; equivalent qualification (e.g. HND in Accounting); or have completed one these within the past 12 months
- this is a team competition
- there is a maximum of 3 people per team (minimum 2 people per team)
- there are no restrictions on what organisations may enter a team, and these may be made up of learners/employees from learning institutes (colleges, universities, schools) or businesses of any size
- there is a limit of two teams per learning institute or organisation permitted to enter this competition
- there is no age limit for this competition

## Accounting Technician Competition Structure:

### Registration:

Once you have completed your registration (and accepted All terms and conditions) you will receive email confirmation, and someone from the Kaplan team will be in touch to arrange a time and date to email you a link to complete a Passive online test.

### Passive Stage:

This test is made up of 25 multiple choice type questions. Each question carries 4 marks and the test is marked out of 100. It covers a range of relevant topics and is to be completed in 1 hour. It will be timed.

When the passive online test has been completed you will be notified when to let you know if you have scored high enough to go through to the National Qualifiers (the practical competition rounds). These will be taking place online this year and will take place between May and July. Follow-up details will be forwarded closer to the time of the National Qualifiers.

### National Qualifiers:

Ensure you're ready to compete in your National Qualifiers by looking at the project brief below.

This outlines the type of tasks you will be expected to carry out. Ask your lecturer/employer for help in any areas where you feel you might have any knowledge gaps and work as a team to gain/improve the necessary skills.

The qualifiers will be held digitally, and there are likely to be at least two dates these will be held on.

### WorldSkills UK National Final Stage one:

The 6 highest scoring competing teams across each National Qualifiers will be invited to compete at the finals.

### WorldSkills UK National Final Stage two:

Ensure you're ready to compete in your WorldSkills UK live final by looking at the project brief below.



This outlines the type of tasks you will be expected to carry out. Ask your lecturer/employer for help in any areas where you feel you might have any knowledge gaps and work as a team to gain/improve the necessary skills. Access the virtual online training tips provided.

**WorldSkills UK National Final Stage three:**

Attend and compete in the WorldSkills UK national final.

## **WorldSkills UK National Qualifiers: Task and specification**

### **National Qualifiers – Acting as an Accounting Technician**

#### **Background:**

You are an accounting technician working for Milner and Smith a firm of Chartered Certified Accountants.

As a team of 2/3 you are working with a client, Peabody Sports Equipment. You are carrying out assisting the company with the preparation of their accounts for the year.

You will be presented with a scenario, some information and tasks as detailed below.

You will be given 2 hours to complete all tasks and you will need to prepare a presentation (approximately 10 mins long) explaining the work you have done. There will be a Question & Answer opportunity at the end of your presentation.

#### **Task 1 – Non Current Assets:**

This task requires you to complete some technical tasks on non-current assets. This will include additions, disposals and depreciation. You will also need to consider some more theoretical aspects too.

#### **Task 2 – Ledger accounts & the Trial Balance:**

This task requires you to complete some technical tasks on accruals/prepayments in the ledger accounts. You will be required to complete a brief trial balance.

#### **Task 3 – Ethics:**

This task requires you to complete tasks on ethics and the fundamental principles.

#### **Task 4 – Budgeting & Variance Analysis:**

This task requires you to complete tasks on flexed budgets and variance analysis.

## Assessment

You will be given 2 hours to complete all tasks and you will need to prepare a presentation (approximately 10 mins long) explaining the work you have done. There will be a Question & Answer opportunity at the end of your presentation, where the judges will ask the team questions on the presentations.

## Marking and Assessment (National Qualifier):

The WorldSkills UK/Kaplan Financial competitions provide an opportunity for trainee accountants to demonstrate the some fundamental technical skills required to both be successful in level 3 exams as well as being able to carry out necessary duties at work.

Judges will also be looking for skills expected of a successful accounting technician such as time management, planning and problem solving skills, working under pressure, communication skills, attitude and behaviour.

All Kaplan Financial Competitions are judged by a panel from across Kaplan's accounting product and commercial teams, who, having worked in practices/industry previously, are experts in both the technical and practical side of the tasks set. The judges' decisions will be independently moderated and quality assured before results are confirmed. The judges will be briefed on assessment procedures prior to the competition.

Judges are looking for technical competency but are also briefed to look for excellence amongst competitors. Judges will therefore take into account skills such as:

- collect, analyse and organise information
- communicate ideas and information
- plan and organise work activities
- be able to identify various stakeholders and set the tone accordingly
- solve problems
- use technology

All task marking is objective and based on agreed criteria.

## **WorldSkills UK Live National Final: Task and specification**

### **Live Finals – Excelling as an Accounting Technician**

#### **Background:**

**You are taking on the role of a team of Accountants working in the business advisory team.**

**You've taken on a new client who requires your firm to carry out some strategic tasks to enable them to assess their current and future strategy.**

More information to be provided at a later date.

#### **Task 1 – SWOT Analysis:**

To be provided at a later date,

#### **Task 2 – Risk Identification:**

To be provided at a later date.

#### **Task 3 – Future strategy:**

To be provided at a later date.

#### **Task 4 – TBC**

To be provided at a later date.

## Assessment:

You will be given 3 hours to complete all tasks and you will need to prepare a presentation (approximately 10 mins long) explaining the work you have done. There will be a Question & Answer opportunity at the end of your presentation, where the judges will ask the team questions on the presentations.

## Marking:

The WorldSkills UK/Kaplan Financial competitions provide an opportunity for trainee accountants to demonstrate the some fundamental technical skills required to both be successful in level 4 exams as well as being able to carry out necessary duties at work.

Judges will also be looking for skills expected of a successful accounting technician such as time management, planning and problem solving skills, working under pressure, communication skills, attitude and behaviour.

All Kaplan Financial Competitions are judged by a panel from across Kaplan's accounting product and commercial teams, who, having worked in practice/industry previously are experts in both the technical and practical side of the tasks set. The judges' decisions will be independently moderated and quality assured before results are confirmed. The judges will be briefed on assessment procedures prior to the competition.

Judges are looking for technical competency but are also briefed to look for excellence amongst competitors. Judges will therefore look for your employability skills such as:

- critical analysis – make sound, ethical business decisions by collating, analysing and interpreting
- communication – communicate complex business information in an easy to understand way
- team work – knowing when to operate as a team member or a team leader is vital. Plan and organise work activities
- adaptability – work flexibly and shift approach based on changing circumstances

- commercial acumen – think creatively about problems to identify solutions and give organisations the competitive edge
- planning and organising – develop a structured plan and use time effectively

All task marking is objective and based on agreed criteria.

## WorldSkills UK Live National Final: what to expect

The live finals usually take place at NEC in Birmingham in November each year, however this year the finals will be taking place at another location which will be confirmed at a later time.

A familiarisation session may be scheduled prior to the finals starting, so you can understand the layout of the location and the accounting technician competition space within it.

It is anticipated that the competing finals teams will be split into two groups: group 1 and group 2. Group 1 will attend on the Thursday of WorldSkills and complete all tasks and competitions, whilst group 2 will attend on the Friday and complete all tasks and competitions.

**Please note, these dates may be subject to change.**

## Judges' Top Tips:

- **preparation and practice:**  
 to be a successful competitor you need to be confident, calm and self-assured when competing  
 prepare by practicing your presentations skills and get to know your technology to ensure you get the result you want without any surprises.
- **time management:**  
 learn to manage your time effectively when completing tasks by working smart not fast!  
 the tasks have allocated times, so practice working to time and under pressure to perfect your timing. If you run out of time in the competition you will lose marks.
- **planning:**  
 make your own plans for how to complete each task, work methodically and even write it down to help you prepare
- **organisation:**  
 Make sure you are organised, make sure all stages of a task are completed.
- **understanding**  
 read the task brief thoroughly and make sure you understand what you need to do.  
 do not be afraid to ask questions, remember there is only one silly question... the one you don't ask!
- **don't worry:**  
 if a part of a task hasn't gone as well as you might have wanted don't worry or dwell on it, just draw a line under that and get on with the next task. Always focus on the marks you can gain not what you might have lost.
- **enjoy:**  
 to get to the WorldSkills UK national qualifiers or the WorldSkills UK live national finals is in itself a massive achievement that you should be extremely proud of! Make the most of the whole WorldSkills UK/Kaplan Financial Competitions process and enjoy it!

## Competition Rules:

Conduct for competitors during live competitions:

- it is the competitor's responsibility to log on/arrive on time to digital and live events at each competition stage. Late arrivals may be excluded from the competition
- competitors will start and finish tasks as instructed by the judges or Competition team
- whilst the qualifying stage of the competition will require each competing team to use their own laptop and internet connection, the live final will have equipment provided onsite
- if there is a power stoppage, the competitors must act according to the instructions of the competition organisers
- competitors are expected to comply with the host venue rules and regulations.

## Beyond WorldSkills UK Live National Finals:

The winners of the Accounting Technician competition will be able to say they are national champions in this field. WorldSkills is an internationally recognised apprentice competition organiser.

As this will be the first year that the Accounting Technician competition will be officially run with WorldSkills, we hope to shape future competitions with your valuable feedback and insight. Eventually, we may be able to look at European or Global Skills competitions in future cycles.

We have included links to further resources throughout this handbook, but should you require more information on Kaplan's accounting programmes or WorldSkills 2022, please see both websites below.

- [Kaplan UK](#)
- [WorldSkills UK](#)

Alternatively, if training is of interest to you, you could consider supporting WorldSkills UK with organising and training, and even helping to run the National finals.



## Contact us:

### **Kaplan:**

Please direct all queries to the following inbox where it will be picked up by the relevant team member, and be sure to include "WorldSkills" in the subject line:

[worldskillsuk@kaplan.co.uk](mailto:worldskillsuk@kaplan.co.uk)

Or, get in touch via our website contact form and you will be directed to the appropriate channel:

<https://kaplan.co.uk/about/contact-us>