



# Why choose a CA?


How do you choose an accountant or professional adviser? Local convenience? A personal recommendation? Cost? In all cases, clients of accountants and business advisers are entitled to assume that they are dealing with a professional who knows what he or she is doing and will provide a good level of service.

Unfortunately, this can't be taken for granted.

**Many individuals describe themselves as accountants, but have no formal training, regulation or requirement to keep their skills up to date – the critical factors that safeguard and reassure you as a client.**

When you choose a CA to advise you, you can do so in the knowledge that you're choosing a professional that has the highest standards of training, regulation and monitoring behind them.

# The difference between a CA and a non-qualified accountant is considerable and here's why:

 THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS OF SCOTLAND	ICAS Chartered Accountants	Non qualified accountants
Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 3 years supervised practical training</li> <li>• 3 years of exams</li> <li>• Specialist training for regulated work</li> </ul>	No requirement for training or qualifications
Ongoing competence	Annual requirement to keep technically up to date which is monitored by ICAS	None
Range of services	Wide range of services. CA firms can provide regulated services such as audit and insolvency, if they have specialist permits/authorisations which will be heavily supervised by ICAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of knowledge unknown and untested *</li> <li>• Audit cannot be provided by an unqualified accountant</li> </ul>
Quality	Quality of work supervised by ICAS and any poor performance is followed up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All accountancy practices are subject to a regular Quality Review visit</li> <li>• All audit and insolvency work is regulated and monitored by specialists teams at ICAS</li> <li>• ICAS itself is regulated</li> </ul>	No supervision, oversight or accountability*
Professional conduct	Bound by strict rules - codes of professional conduct and ethics - compliance is monitored	None *
Making a complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints can be first made to the adviser who is bound to deal with it expeditiously.</li> <li>• Complaints of professional misconduct or professional incompetence can be made to ICAS who will investigate any claim thoroughly</li> </ul>	No official complaints mechanism *
PII insurance	All CA firms are required to hold insurance in case of client complaints or claims	No insurance therefore no comeback *
Disciplinary	A range of stringent disciplinary sanctions can be imposed against any individual who is found to have breached any Rule, Bye-law or whose conduct falls below the expected standard	No comeback *

\* Some unqualified accountants/advisers can conduct insolvency services but only through a permit issued by a Recognised Professional Body (RPB), in which case this work will be supervised and there will be comeback via insurance, complaints and disciplinary. But it is important that you first check that the insolvency practitioner does have a current and valid permit issued by an RPB.

When you are looking for professional advice on your business affairs, it makes sense to be properly informed about your adviser. It makes sense to choose a CA.