Accounting Paraprofessional

About my job:
As an accounting paraprofessional, I carry out a variety of financial duties including gathering data, calculating fees and charges, formulating billing invoices and maintaining accounting records. Individuals in this career field may also be certified to prepare tax returns.

What I do every day:
• Use accounting software to record, store and analyze information
• Check figures, postings and documents for accuracy
• Summarize financial data to keep financial records, using journals, ledgers and computers
• Debit, credit and total accounts on spreadsheets and databases
• Operate 10-key calculators
• Receive, record and bank cash, checks and vouchers
• Comply with all government and company policies
• Compile statistical, financial, and accounting reports including cash receipts, expenditures, accounts payable and receivable, and profits and losses
• Code documents according to company procedures
• Reconcile and report discrepancies found in records

What makes my job great?

Job growth:
Rapid growth is projected for my job, as much as 10 percent in the next 10 years.

Short-term training:
Many of the employers hiring in this field prefer that applicants have earned an associate degree.

Good pay:
Currently, entry-level positions in the Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor area start off around $11.15 per hour. (That means 50 percent earn less than this number, and the other 50 percent earn more.)

Benefits:
Most accounting paraprofessionals work full time, with benefits that may include:

• Health care
• Dental
• Paid vacation

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How can you become an accounting paraprofessional?

**Academic/training credentials:**
Most employers require an associate degree in accounting.

**Work experience/internships:**
Employers may require training in vocational schools. An internship or apprenticeship experience is typically preferred.

**Skills and requirements:**
- Excellent command of English language
- Advanced mathematics classes
- Customer service
- Familiarity with computers/electronics
- Excellent reading and writing comprehension
- Excellent decision-making skills
- Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills
- Skilled at processing information
- Comfortable performing administrative activities

**Potential job titles:**
- Accounts payable clerk
- Accounts receivable clerk
- Accounting assistant
- Billing clerk
- Billing coordinator
- Office manager
- Tax preparer

**Potential local employers:**
- Accounting Associates
- Accounting Solutions
- Continental Bookkeeping
- H&R Block
- KLZ Financial Services Incorporated
- Revenue Assistance
- SE Management Inc.
- CPA firms
- Cardinal Credit Union
- Other businesses

**Where you can find jobs:**
- Online job boards
- Career fairs
- Networking
- Social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter)
- Department of Career Services at colleges
Local educational opportunities

Two-year institutions:
- Lakeland Community College: Associate of Applied Business in Accounting

Four-year institutions:
- Holden University Center of Lakeland Community College/ Franklin University: Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Forensic Accounting.

Technical prep:
- Lakeshore Compact College Tech Prep Marketing and Business Administration
- Excel TECC Tech Prep Business and Administration
- Auburn Career Center Business Management Technology

Coursework per educational entity:

Secondary pathway: Finance
Postsecondary program: Accounting

An Example of Course with Secondary and Postsecondary Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Postsecondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1 1st Semester</td>
<td>Year 1 2nd Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2 1st Semester</td>
<td>Year 2 2nd Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>Business Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Accounting</td>
<td>Intro to Financial Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Applications</td>
<td>Microeconomics</td>
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<td>Microeconomics</td>
<td>Computer Accounting</td>
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<td>English IV</td>
<td>Intermediate Accounting I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trigonometry/ Calculus</td>
<td>Cost Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Federal Taxes</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Government</td>
<td>Intro to Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Principles</td>
<td>Marketing Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Natural Physical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capstone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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High School to Technical Education Program Courses
High School Courses for Postsecondary Credit (including Apprenticeship Hours) and the Corresponding Postsecondary Courses

Visit education.ohio.gov/CareerConnections for reference information.
Course titles and sequences will vary between schools.
How can I grow my career?

Where could I focus or specialize in my career?

**Corporate Industry Sector**
- Accountant
- Senior accountant
- Accounting manager
- Controller
- Chief financial officer

**Public Industry Sector**
- Auditor
- Senior auditor
- Auditing manager
- Partner/principal

The career ladder

- **Bookkeeper**
  - Certificate, Accounting Technology
  - Supervised experience
  - $34,550 annual salary

- **Accountant**
  - Associate Degree, Accounting
  - Internship
  - $59,610 annual salary

- **Financial Examiner**
  - Bachelor’s Degree, Finance
  - Internship
  - $67,390 annual salary

Sources/References:

O*Net Online-Summary Report, Ohio Labor Market and Finance 2013 Information
The Robert Half Salary Guide for Accounting
CareerOneStop