

Joint statement of the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council (AFRC) and the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA) in relation to the use of designations by Fellows of the HKICPA holding practising certificates

1. The AFRC and the HKICPA are issuing this joint statement to clarify the use of the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)”, the related characters “執業資深會計師” and initials “FCPA (practising)”, following the commencement on 1 October 2022 of the legislative amendments to the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council Ordinance (Cap. 588) (“**AFRCO**”) pursuant to the further regulatory reform of the accounting profession.
2. Since 1 October 2022, there have been enquiries as to whether Fellows of the HKICPA (i.e. HKICPA members with at least seven years of membership and approved by the HKICPA Council to be so designated according to by-law 22(2) of the Professional Accountants By-laws (Cap. 50A) (“By-laws”)) who hold practising certificates may continue to use the designation, characters and initials referred to in paragraph 1 above.

Basis for the use of the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)” and related characters and initials

Prior to 1 October 2022

3. Neither the Professional Accountants Ordinance (Cap. 50) nor the By-laws provided for the use of the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)”. However, by way of a ruling made by the HKICPA Council, “a Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants who holds a practising certificate may describe himself as a “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising) (執業資深會計師)” and use the initials “FCPA (practising)”. This HKICPA Council ruling is set out in section 800 in Chapter C of the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (**COE**) issued by the HKICPA.

As from 1 October 2022

4. As from 1 October 2022, the AFRC has become the responsible authority for issuing practising certificates to Certified Public Accountants (“CPA”) (i.e. HKICPA members) under Division 1 of Part 2A of the AFRCO and for maintaining the register of CPAs (practising) under Division 4 of Part 2A of the AFRCO. By virtue of section 20AAZZN of the AFRCO, only CPAs who hold practising certificates are eligible to use the designation “Certified Public Accountant (Practising)”, the related characters “執業會計師” and initials “CPA (practising)”. In practical terms, there are no changes relating to the use of the designation “Certified Public Accountant (Practising)”.
5. As the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)” includes reference to both the holding of a practising certificate and fellowship of the HKICPA, the use of such designation after 1 October 2022 should be determined by the AFRC and the HKICPA jointly.

6. Accordingly, the Council of the HKICPA has repealed the ruling referred to in section 800 in Chapter C of the COE. This joint statement will instead replace the said HKICPA Council ruling as the basis for the use of the related designation on the grounds set out below.

Status quo for Fellows of the HKICPA holding practising certificates

7. The AFRC and the HKICPA note that it has been common for Fellows of the HKICPA holding practising certificates to describe themselves on their name cards and stationery as “FCPA (practising)” and “執業資深會計師”, and the designations are well accepted in the profession. The AFRC and the HKICPA have decided to maintain the status quo.
8. The AFRC and the HKICPA have therefore agreed that as from 1 October 2022, a Fellow of the HKICPA who holds a practising certificate may continue to use the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)”, the related characters “執業資深會計師” and initials “FCPA (practising)”.
9. The HKICPA will revise section 800 of Chapter C of the COE to refer to this joint statement as the basis for the continued use of the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)” and related characters and initials.

Use of the designations “Certified Public Accountant” and “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants”

10. This joint statement relates only to the use of the designation “Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Practising)” and related characters and initials.
11. As the HKICPA continues to be responsible for registering CPAs, this joint statement does not affect the use of the designations “*Certified Public Accountant*” and “*Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants*” nor the related characters and initials which continue to be governed by by-law 22 of the By-laws.

Accounting and Financial Reporting Council

Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants

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