



2024-0011693LHPO

Luke Hall MP

Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education

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Andrew Harding
Secretary General of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)

By email: ross.archer@aicpa-cima.com

15 May 2024

Dear Mr Harding,

Thank you so much for writing to the Secretary of State, on 15 April, regarding STEM Skills and accountancy. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

Firstly, thank you for sharing the report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Accounting for Growth and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants on whether accounting should be considered a STEM subject. I agree that it is crucial to promote STEM skills and careers. That is why department officials are working across government, including with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, to boost science and technology talent and skills through the UK Science and Technology Framework.

The department is committed to developing a world-leading skills system which is employer-focused, high-quality, and fit for the future. We welcome engagement from business and professional bodies like CIMA across our employer-led skills programmes, including T Levels, apprenticeships, Skills Bootcamps, and Higher Technical Qualifications.

Analysts in the department's Unit for Future Skills have developed a dashboard on the supply and demand of STEM skills, this is available the via: tinyurl.com/MRXW4JN2. Further to this, the Royal Society have developed a definition of STEM occupations in collaboration with academics, government departments and industry experts. Under this definition, Chartered and Certified accountants are a STEM occupation. Whilst definitions of STEM and Science subjects can vary, these definitions are primarily used for analytical and reporting purposes, rather than for policy design or funding decisions.

We continue to work with all sectors to promote economic growth and contribute to the UK economy. We are working to ensure the skills system delivers the skills employers need and addresses skills gaps to improve economic productivity. We continue to support the accounting sector through apprenticeships; there were 15,620 starts on accountancy apprenticeship standards in 2022/23.

We will say more about our plans for all students to study maths up to the age of 18 in the Advanced British Standard plan for delivery which will be published later this year.

Thank you also for your kind invitation to a roundtable discussion. Unfortunately, diary pressures prevent me from accepting on this occasion, but I have asked officials to get in touch with you to discuss whether they might be able to attend.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LH', followed by a long horizontal flourish that tapers to the right.

Luke Hall MP
Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education