

New School of Professional Accounting aims to serve South Africa better

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With the launch of its School of Professional Accounting, Milpark Education aims to make finance and accounting skills, and the chartered accountant industry, more broadly accessible to South Africans - especially to students who have been hampered by disadvantages of schooling and background, as well as professional and personal circumstances.



Private higher education provider, Milpark Education, has announced the launch of its new School of Professional Accounting, which officially opened on 1 October 2022. The School of Professional Accounting joins Milpark's Business School, School of Commerce, School of Financial Planning and Insurance, and the School of Investment and Banking.

The newly formed School of Professional Accounting also incorporates Milpark Education's existing CA Connect Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting (PGDA), which offers the first and only SAICA-accredited online path to becoming a Chartered Accountant (CA) in South Africa.

"The establishment of the new School of Professional Accounting, incorporating CA Connect, is exciting," says Marilize Putter, who serves as Executive Head of the Financial Services Schools at Milpark. "We will now be able to serve a wider sector of industry and make a more sustainable impact on students' lives."

The School's opening comes at a critical time – when qualified financial experts are in short supply. In 2021, South Africa's Department of Home Affairs' Critical Skills List indicated demand for general accountants, management accountants, tax professionals, accountants in practice, financial accountants, forensic accountants and other financial specialists – essentially calling for foreign nationals to fulfil these roles.

But thanks to the fast-growing CA Connect brand, which has already leveraged the career path of hundreds of prospective CAs, the School of Professional Accounting is set to attract many students. "It is also clear that business and industry are enthralled by Milpark programmes," says Putter. "We have received a great deal of interest from stakeholders to partner with us, as well as firms to recruit our students."

The Milpark School of Professional Accounting will offer various accounting qualifications and short courses alongside the renowned CA Connect PGDA and Bridging Course, leading directly to the CA qualification. Part of the School's core mission is to empower South African students whose educational journeys have been hampered by disadvantages of schooling and background, as well as personal and professional circumstances.

“We provide a safe environment for students, whom we recognise as having great human potential, to actualise it,” explains Andrew Horsfall, Chief Executive Officer of Milpark Education. “We do this by helping our students navigate the complexities of life and work on their journey to become an accountant or chartered accountant because we know that academic marks don’t reflect capability, and that success in the real world is not about scorecards,” Horsfall concludes.

The School of Professional Accounting, incorporating CA Connect, prides itself on the deep and authentic relationships it cultivates through one-one-one engagements with students while on their learning journeys. The School also boasts a lively online community that enables students to form connections with other students, lecturers, counsellors, and a range of faculty staff – many of which continue well beyond graduation.

“At Milpark Education, we are thinking of our collective future in South Africa. How can we get more students into tertiary education, and genuinely enable them to succeed in the world beyond us?” asks Putter. “We know how genuine thinking unlocks possibilities for individuals, and the educational journeys we offer are designed to develop that.”

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Milpark Education was established in 1997, becoming one of the first private providers of higher management education in South Africa. Milpark services the higher education needs of various corporate entities as well as public students, through the qualification offerings of four schools: the School of Professional Accounting (incorporating CA Connect), the Business School; the School of Commerce; and the School of Financial Services. It currently offers 23 accredited programmes in higher education.

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