

# From Classroom to Career: Bridging the GAAP

## Topics

- Employers are Looking for More than a Degree
- Why QuickBooks?
- Employers Want Employees Skilled in QuickBooks
- Certification is the Key
- Add QuickBooks Certification to Your Program

Each year thousands of students graduate from community or technical colleges in accounting, bookkeeping, finance, and business management programs. These students face the challenge of finding employment in a very competitive workforce due to a tough economy. Many of these graduates were unemployed or underemployed and returned to school to obtain new skills and credentials in order to help their employment situation. Educators are tasked with providing these students with the skills and credentials they need to successfully re-enter the workforce and find immediate employability.

### Employers are Looking for More than a Degree

Students are returning to school in order to 're-tool' to meet the demand's of today's marketplace. Rosemary Hall, Program Chair of the Accounting Program at Bellevue College, explains, "Having a degree is not enough. In today's market they have to have more. Employers are looking for certifications."

Recently, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the U.S. Department of Education announced an initiative to help battle this socio-economic insufficiency in educating our workforce. "Current economic demands mean that a postsecondary degree or relevant workforce certificate is the new minimum requirement for America's competitive workforce," they report. Industry-recognized certification programs ensure students are acquiring the knowledge and skills valued in today's workplace.

For institutions seeking to keep curriculum vitalized and relevant, certification plays a critical role in bridging classroom learning to real-world application. QuickBooks certification is the perfect way to align education and workforce training for students and workers in the fields of accounting, bookkeeping, finance, and business management.



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“The (QuickBooks) certification for our students is, in many ways, the thing that is going to open the door. It sets them apart. It also gives them confidence so when they do get that interview, they really feel that they have an area of expertise. They have something they can bring to the table and offer the employer.”

**Rosemary Hall**  
Program Chair, Accounting  
Bellevue College

### Why QuickBooks?

Bellevue College is a diverse, 2-year college with all programs focused on getting students jobs. Valerie Coyle, a student at Bellevue says, “I was a bookkeeper for a long time but I did not know QuickBooks, and I found that it’s absolutely necessary to know QuickBooks. The job market out there is full of jobs that require QuickBooks.”

Bookkeeping in the 21st Century necessitates more than knowledge of GAAP principles. Proficiency and experience with QuickBooks, the #1 rated small business accounting software, helps bridge the gap. Over 4.5 million small businesses use QuickBooks. In fact, it is considered the industry leader in managerial accounting software for small businesses today. Created with these small businesses in mind, QuickBooks boasts an assortment of features aimed at helping users manage each of their accounting functions, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, credit card management and financial reporting.

### Employers Want Employees Skilled in QuickBooks

#### A few statistics:

- 4 out of 5 accountants recommend QuickBooks to their small-business clients.
- Over 4,200 financial institutions are connected to QuickBooks.

QuickBooks skills are in high demand. A quick online job search using the keyword “QuickBooks” yielded the following results:

- Careerbuilder.com lists 1,708 job postings
- Monster.com lists 1,000+ job postings
- Indeed.com lists 5,736 job postings
- Beyond.com lists 2,187 job postings
- Job.com lists 1,473 job postings
- LinkedIn.com lists 700 job postings

### Certification is the Key

QuickBooks Certified User (QBCU) certification is the best way to communicate one’s skills and expertise of QuickBooks to potential employers and stand out from the crowd in a competitive job market. Certification shows that the student can effectively work in QuickBooks on day one without additional training. Job placement for graduates is easier, as employers can gain confidence in a potential hire by verifying their certification online.

## QuickBooks Certification:

- Validates QuickBooks knowledge and skills for a position in professional accountancy
- Demonstrates bookkeeping skills acumen in a tangible, measurable way
- Positions students as credible job candidates to employers

QuickBooks certification validates essential knowledge for an entry-level accounting career. Also, for accounting professionals wishing to supplement their resume, QBCU certification proves they have skills employers want.

## About the Exam

The QuickBooks Certified User Exam is available for QuickBooks Pro/Premier 2011, 2012, 2012 Canada, and 2013. The newest version is QuickBooks Pro/Premier 2013. It consists of 50 questions, both multiple choice and simulation. The exam format presents a very realistic and practical test environment, asking students to perform specific tasks and complete functions as they would in QuickBooks. The test candidate has 50 minutes to take the exam in a proctored setting. Within two weeks of passing the exam, the student will receive email notification of their official digital certificate, including the QBCU logo that highlights their accomplishment and can be used on their resume, business cards, and other areas of recognition.

## Add QuickBooks Certification to Your Program

Adding QuickBooks to your curriculum does not eliminate the need to teach accounting concepts. Instead, it enhances the concepts students are learning through applying them to the software they will use in the workplace. It is easily implemented into your existing coursework and is a valuable addition to your present classes.

Developed with the intent to demonstrate proficiency as a capstone to their coursework, the certification exam can easily be administered onsite or at a local Certiport Authorized Testing Center.

Robert Quinn, Educational Specialist for Business and IT Programs for Miami-Dade County Public Schools in Florida, says that implementing QuickBooks certification helped to increase their enrollment. "Our Accounting Program has become more popular since we implemented the QBCU exam, and I believe it's due to the industry certification and its relevance in the workforce."



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Teachers are very pleased with the addition. Cary Benevidas, a teacher who was an accountant for 20 years, says, "Coming from industry, I know that QuickBooks certification is a key tool for a resume and college applications. Potential employers have no idea how good the school or teacher was, but earning certification gives third party validation that our students have mastered this software and can use it on the job."

For institutions seeking to keep curriculum vitalized and relevant, certification plays a critical role in bridging classroom learning to real-world application. The QBCU credential increases the value of academic programs and provides your institution with additional recruiting tools.

A recent Certiport survey of accounting instructors at two-year colleges revealed that 84% believe students who are preparing for an accounting career should be conversant in QuickBooks. One respondent said, "Many (students) now learn QuickBooks as they learn bookkeeping or accounting...You might start every bookkeeping or accounting course with it."

## In Conclusion

Now is the time to boost student employability, help retain current enrollment, and boost student recruitment by adding QuickBooks certification to your program.

“ I recommend getting certified (in QuickBooks). I did and I consider it a critical component of our firm’s continued success. ”

**Karl Sexton**  
Senior Partner  
Accounting On-Call

