

Guide for the Issuance of Practising Certificates

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Chapter 1 Definitions

1.1 Definitions

1.1.1 Unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms shall have the meanings set out below.

Terms	Meanings
AFRCO	AFRCO means the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council Ordinance (Cap. 588).
approved accounting experience	Approved accounting experience means the professional accountancy experience approved as sufficient practical experience by the Council of the HKICPA.
certified public accountant (“CPA”)	A CPA means a person registered as a certified public accountant by virtue of section 22 of the PA Ordinance.
CPA (practising)	A CPA (practising) means a CPA holding a practising certificate issued under section 20AAD or 20AAI of the AFRCO.
corporate practice	A corporate practice means a company registered as a corporate practice under Division 3 of Part 2A of the AFRCO.
CPA firm	A CPA firm means: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a CPA (practising) who practises accountancy on the accountant's own account under a firm name registered under Division 2 of Part 2A of the AFRCO; or• a firm of CPAs (practising) that practises accountancy in partnership and is registered under Division 2 of Part 2A of the AFRCO.
HKICPA	HKICPA means the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants incorporated by section 3 of the PA Ordinance.
Online Application System	Online Application System means the registration system maintained by the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council.
PA Ordinance	PA Ordinance means the Professional Accountants Ordinance (Cap. 50).
practising certificate	A practising certificate means a practising certificate issued under section 20AAD or 20AAI of the AFRCO.
specified accountancy body	A specified accountancy body means: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an accountancy body between which and the HKICPA there is in force an agreement of mutual or reciprocal recognition¹; or• an accountancy body accepted by the Council of the HKICPA as described in section 24(1A) of the PA Ordinance².

¹ Please refer to the list of accountancy bodies with which there is a mutual or reciprocal membership agreement in force between the accountancy body and the HKICPA. The list is available on the HKICPA website (<https://www.hkicpa.org.hk/en>) under the heading “Recognition of overseas bodies”.

² Please refer to the list of accountancy bodies accepted by the Council of the HKICPA under section 24(1A) of the PA Ordinance. The list is available on the HKICPA website (https://www.hkicpa.org.hk/-/media/HKICPA-Website/HKICPA/section3_registration/Register-as-a-CPA/pdf-file/form/accountancy-bodies-under-section-241A.pdf).

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The Accounting and Financial Reporting Council (“**AFRC**”) is empowered to issue practising certificates to CPAs under Division 1 of Part 2A of the AFRCO. It is an offence for a person who is not a CPA (practising) to hold any appointment or render any services, whether paid or unpaid, as:
- (a) an auditor of a company within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622); or
 - (b) unless otherwise exempted by the AFRC, an auditor of accounts for the purposes of any other Ordinance.
- 2.1.2 This Guide provides practical guidance on the criteria and procedures for making a practising certificate and its renewal applications; and procedures for complying with notification requirements.
- 2.1.3 Unless otherwise specified in this Guide, all documents in relation to the applications to be submitted to the AFRC should be:
- (a) sent by post to the following address:
 - Policy, Registration and Oversight Department
 - Accounting and Financial Reporting Council
 - 10/F, Two Taikoo Place
 - 979 King's Road, Quarry Bay
 - Hong Kong
 - (b) originals or certified true copies of the originals certified by any of the following persons (self-certification will not be accepted):
 - (i) a CPA (full name with HKICPA membership number and contact details should be provided);
 - (ii) a legal practitioner (full name with contact details should be provided); and
 - (iii) a Government District Officer (through statutory declaration).
- 2.1.4 Apart from submission of documents under paragraph 2.1.3 above, communications with the AFRC in relation to the applications could be sent by email to registration@afrc.org.hk, by post to the address specified in paragraph 2.1.3(a) above or any other ways specified by the AFRC.
- 2.1.5 This Guide is not intended to deal with all situations and, subject to compliance with the AFRCO, the AFRC may depart from this Guide where the circumstances of the case so require. Enquiries on practising certificate related matters can also be made to the AFRC via e-mail to registration@afrc.org.hk or hotline at +852 3586 7800.

2.2 Disclaimer

- 2.2.1 This Guide is for guidance, and does not constitute legal advice. You should seek your own legal advice where necessary. In the event of any inconsistency between this Guide and the AFRCO, the AFRCO shall prevail.

Chapter 3 Practising certificate application

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 A CPA may apply to the AFRC for a practising certificate.

3.2 Issuance criteria

3.2.1 The AFRC will not grant an application for a practising certificate unless the following issuance criteria are met.

Issuance criteria	
<i>Status of the applicant</i>	
(a)	The applicant is a CPA.
<i>Local experience and knowledge</i>	
(b)	<p>The applicant has had the following full-time approved accounting experience³ specified by the Council of the HKICPA in one or more specified offices[#]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) at least 30 months acquired after the applicant has become a member of a specified accountancy body (see paragraph 1.1.1) or a CPA; or(ii) at least 4 years, and at least 1 year of that experience has been acquired after the applicant has become a member of a specified accountancy body or a CPA. <p>[#] A specified office means the office of a CPA practising or a person practising public accountancy in the jurisdiction of a specified accountancy body.</p> <p>See also paragraph 3.2.2 below.</p>
(c)	<p>The applicant possesses the local experience and knowledge of local law and practice that the Council of the HKICPA considers necessary.</p> <p>The Council of the HKICPA requires the applicant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) complete the practising certificate examinations⁴ set by the Council of the HKICPA, which include an examination in local law and taxation; and(ii) have had at least 1 year of full-time approved accounting experience³ in Hong Kong within three years preceding the practising certificate application (this requirement is not applicable for renewal application). <p>See also paragraphs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below.</p>

³ Please refer to the definition in paragraph 1.1.1 above and the "[Approved accounting experience for issuance of practising certificate](#)" at the HKICPA website for the relevant requirements.

⁴ Please refer to the "[Practising Certificate Examinations](#)" at the HKICPA website for the relevant requirements.

Issuance criteria	
(d)	The applicant has complied with the continuing professional development requirements set by the HKICPA ⁵ .
(e)	<p>The applicant is ordinarily resident in Hong Kong.</p> <p>The AFRC will generally regard an applicant as being ordinarily resident in Hong Kong if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the applicant has been present in Hong Kong for no less than 180 days during the period of 12 months preceding the application; (ii) the applicant is presently residing in Hong Kong at the time of application, intends to reside in Hong Kong for the next 12 months and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (A) has the right of abode in Hong Kong or the right to land in Hong Kong and is not subject to any condition of stay; OR (B) has been residing in Hong Kong for a period of time; or (iii) the applicant is working in Mainland China and continues to be a partner / director / employee of a CPA firm or a corporate practice, has the right of abode in Hong Kong or the right to land in Hong Kong and is not subject to any condition of stay, and continues to maintain a place of residence in Hong Kong or the principal members of the applicant's family (spouse and/or minor children) have been present in Hong Kong for no less than 180 days during the period of 12 months preceding the date of the application. <p>See also paragraphs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below.</p>
<i>Fit and proper to be a CPA</i>	
(f)	The applicant is not a bankrupt and has not entered into a voluntary arrangement (as defined by section 2 of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6)) with his or her creditors.
(g)	The applicant is not subject to an order made by the Disciplinary Committee of the HKICPA or a sanction imposed by the AFRC that the applicant not be issued with a practising certificate either permanently or for a period of time as the respective Disciplinary Committee of the HKICPA or the AFRC considers appropriate.
(h)	<p>The applicant satisfies the fit and proper requirement to be a CPA under the PA Ordinance.</p> <p>See also paragraph 3.2.4 below.</p>

⁵ Please refer to the "[Summary of Mandatory CPD requirements](#)" at the HKICPA website for the relevant requirements.

Issuance criteria	
<i>Practice intention</i>	
(i)	The applicant intends to practise as a CPA (practising).
(j)	The number of CPA firm/corporate practice names under which the applicant intends to be registered as a sole practitioner, a director, a partner or an authorized signatory of a CPA firm should in no case exceed three. See also paragraph 3.2.5 below.
<i>Registered office</i>	
(k)	The applicant has a registered office in Hong Kong to which all communications and notices may be addressed.

3.2.2 The issuance criteria as set out in paragraphs 3.2.1(b), 3.2.1(c) and 3.2.1(e) are exempted if the applicant is registered as a public accountant (as defined by section 2(1) of the PA Ordinance) immediately before 8 September 2004.

3.2.3 The issuance criteria as set out in paragraphs 3.2.1(c) and 3.2.1(e) may be dispensed if the AFRC considers that the applicant has acquired substantial experience in accountancy, either in Hong Kong or elsewhere, over a period of time considered sufficient by the AFRC.

3.2.4 When determining whether an applicant is fit and proper to be a CPA, the AFRC will generally have regard to the following matters:

- (a) the person's professional qualification, knowledge, skills and experience;
- (b) the person's reputation, character, reliability and integrity;
- (c) the person's financial status and solvency;
- (d) whether any disciplinary action has been taken against the person under the AFRCO or the PA Ordinance; and
- (e) whether the person has been convicted of any offence in Hong Kong or elsewhere.

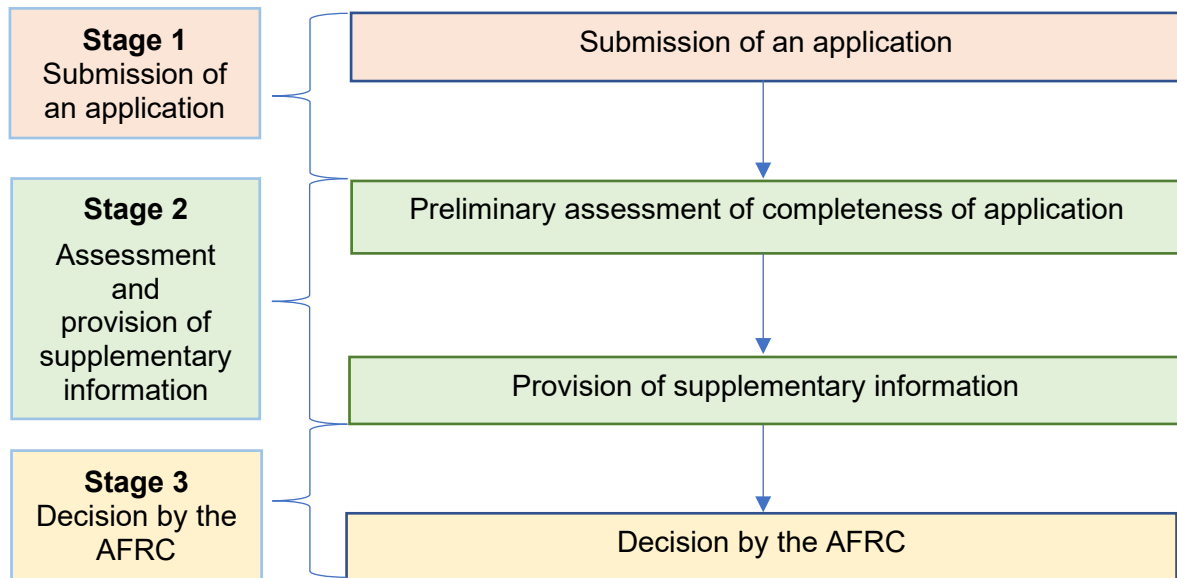
The list above is not exhaustive. The AFRC will consider the fit and proper status of each applicant on a case-by-case basis, having regard to all relevant matters.

3.2.5 A CPA (practising) may, in addition to practising in his or her own name, practise in at most three of the following mode of practice:

- (a) in the name of a CPA firm;
- (b) in the name of a corporate practice; and / or
- (c) as an authorized signatory of a CPA firm.

3.3 Application process

3.3.1 The application process can be summarized as follows:



3.3.2 The onus is on the applicant to satisfy the AFRC that the practising certificate application should be granted.

Stage 1 – Submission of an application

3.3.3 A CPA applying for a practising certificate is required to complete and submit the application form “[Application for the Issuance of a Practising Certificate](#)” (Form PC-1) to the AFRC, together with all necessary supporting documents.

Supporting documents

3.3.4 The applicant has to provide the following supporting documents:

- (a) copies of the applicant’s Hong Kong identity card and certificate of registration as a CPA issued by the HKICPA;
- (b) copies of examination status reports or records issued by the relevant accountancy body confirming the fulfilment of the examination requirements, i.e. passed papers PC-Business Assurance / PC-Law / PC-Taxation of the HKICPA, or a testimonial of the Qualification Programme (QP) examination results issued by the HKICPA or the equivalent;
 - (i) where the applicant is a QP graduate claiming exemption from the HKICPA Aptitude Test in Hong Kong Law, a testimonial from the Education and Training Department of the HKICPA attesting the fulfilment of the Hong Kong law requirement for QP graduates⁶;

⁶ Please refer to the [HKICPA Instructions](#) to apply for the testimonial.

- (c) original [“Proforma\(s\) for Testimonial”](#) (Form PC-PT) from past and present employer(s) certifying the applicant’s employment period, position held, specific job nature and percentage of audit involvement. In particular:
- (i) where the signer of the form is not a CPA (practising) in the event that the relevant experience was acquired outside Hong Kong in a jurisdiction of a specified accountancy body, the signer is required to provide a copy of his or her membership certificate issued by the relevant accountancy body or similar documentary evidence; and
 - (ii) where the approved accounting experience was acquired in a Mainland CPA practice that is a branch / subsidiary of or affiliated with a CPA firm or a corporate practice in Hong Kong, an official letter duly signed by the sole practitioner / practising partner / practising member director of the CPA firm or corporate practice certifying that the applicant has satisfied the prescribed criteria for recognition⁷ of such experience as specified by the Council of the HKICPA.
- (d) where the [“Proforma for Testimonial”](#) (Form PC-PT) submitted with the application is not issued by the applicant's present employer which is a person practising public accountancy in Hong Kong or the jurisdiction of a specified accountancy body, a letter from his or her present employer confirming that his or her employer is aware of and has no objection to the applicant's taking out a practising certificate;
- (e) two original [“Character References”](#) (Form PC-CR) submitted directly to the AFRC by two referees, who are current members of either the HKICPA or an accountancy body accepted by the Council of the HKICPA for membership admission purposes⁸. Where the referee is not a current CPA (practising), the referee is required to provide a copy of his or her membership certificate issued by the relevant accountancy body or similar documentary evidence;
- (f) where the applicant intends to practise as a partner of an existing CPA firm or as a director of an existing corporate practice, a letter from the CPA firm or corporate practice confirming its intention to admit the applicant as a partner of the CPA firm or a director of the corporate practice;
- (g) where the applicant intends to practise as an authorized signatory of an existing CPA firm, a letter from the CPA firm giving such authorization;
- (h) where the applicant intends to practise as a sole practitioner, a partner or an authorized signatory of a proposed CPA firm or a director of a proposed corporate practice, the completed [“Application for Registration of a Firm Name and Firm”](#) (Form FIRM-1) or the completed [“Application for Registration of a Corporate Practice”](#) (Form CP-1A);

⁷ Please refer to the [“Approved accounting experience for issuance of practising certificate”](#) at the HKICPA website for the prescribed criteria for recognition of Mainland China experience.

⁸ Please refer to the list of accountancy bodies with which there is a reciprocal membership agreement in force between the accountancy body and the HKICPA. The list is published on the page of “Recognition of overseas bodies” at the HKICPA website (<https://www.hkicpa.org.hk/en>).

- (i) where the applicant intends to practise accountancy in his or her own name and is the landlord of the registered office, documentary evidence to prove the ownership of the property such as land search results;
- (j) where the applicant intends to practise accountancy in his or her own name and is not the landlord of the registered office, a letter of consent from the landlord or leaseholder authorizing the use of his or her or its premises as the applicant's registered office and the erection of a signboard at the entrance to the office;
- (k) where the applicant will resign / has resigned from his or her present employment to practise on a full-time basis after taking out a practising certificate, documentary evidence to prove the resignation of the applicant from the present or last employment and that he or she will not engage in other full-time employment upon the issuance of practising certificate; and
- (l) the completed and signed "[*Fit and Proper Declaration Form*](#)" (Form F&P), including an explanation where the answer to any of the questions set out in the form is "yes".

Application fee

- 3.3.5 The applicant has to pay an application fee in the amount and way specified in the fee schedule published on the AFRC website. The application fee is non-refundable.

Stage 2 – Assessment and provision of supplementary information

Preliminary assessment of completeness of the application

- 3.3.6 The AFRC will first conduct a preliminary assessment on the application to check whether the information received is complete and the application fee is paid.
- 3.3.7 The AFRC will ordinarily provide an acknowledgement of receipt to the applicant within 10 business days upon being satisfied with the results of the preliminary assessment.

Provision of supplementary information

- 3.3.8 The AFRC will conduct an assessment on the application and may, where appropriate, require the applicant to provide supplementary information which the AFRC considers relevant to the application. Unless otherwise specified, the applicant is required to respond in writing by ways specified in paragraph 2.1.4 above within 10 business days of the date of the request.
- 3.3.9 If the applicant does not provide the required information to the AFRC within the stipulated deadline (i.e. 6 months after the receipt of the application), the AFRC may proceed to make a decision on the practising certificate application based on the evidence before it, and will likely refuse the application on the basis that there is insufficient information available for the AFRC to satisfy itself that the issuance criteria have been met.

Processing time

- 3.3.10 The AFRC will outline in its website the submission deadlines for which practising certificate applications will be processed by a given point of time. Results will usually be available 10 weeks after the submission deadline, if the AFRC is satisfied that no supplementary information is required for the application.
- 3.3.11 Although the AFRC will strive to adhere to this timetable, the time it takes to process a practising certificate application may vary depending on a number of factors such as:
- (a) the quality and completeness of the application;
 - (b) the quality of the supporting documents;
 - (c) the complexity of the application;
 - (d) subsequent changes made to the application;
 - (e) the time taken for other regulatory bodies to respond to vetting requests, where applicable; and
 - (f) the number of applications the AFRC is processing at any particular time.

Stage 3 – Decision by the AFRC

- 3.3.12 The AFRC will consider all available information in its possession (whether or not provided by the applicant) and then make a decision on the practising certificate application.
- 3.3.13 The AFRC will inform the applicant of its decision by written notice. In this respect:
- (a) if the practising certificate application is granted without a condition or is granted subject to a condition as described in paragraph 3.3.15 below – the AFRC will issue an electronic practising certificate and provide a login of a user account of the Online Application System to the applicant; or
 - (b) if the practising certificate application is refused – the AFRC will provide a statement of reasons for the decision in the written notice.
- 3.3.14 The practising certificate will take effect on the day specified by the AFRC in the written notice and expire on 31 December of the year in which the practising certificate takes effect.

Imposition of conditions

- 3.3.15 The AFRC may grant a practising certificate application subject to a condition that the applicant must comply with the additional continuing professional development requirements set by the AFRC within a period specified by the AFRC. The applicant is required to notify the AFRC in writing by ways specified in paragraph 2.1.4 above when the condition is fulfilled.

3.3.16 An applicant who is aggrieved by a decision of the AFRC to refuse the application or grant the application subject to a condition may apply to the Accounting and Financial Reporting Review Tribunal for a review of that decision. The relevant procedures are set out in paragraphs 17 to 18 of the AFRC's ["Outline of the AFRC's Process for the Issuance of Practising Certificates"](#).

3.4 Post-issuance filing requirements

3.4.1 Where the applicant practises in his or her own name, the applicant, is required to provide the AFRC:

Within three months from the effective date of the practising certificate

- (a) a signed "[Confirmation of Erection of a Signboard](#)" (Form PC-SB) confirming the erection of a signboard at the entrance to the registered office;
- (b) a specimen letterhead bearing the name and registered office of the applicant;
and

Within six months from the effective date of the practising certificate

- (c) a copy of the Business Registration Certificate of the applicant with the name of the business stated therein exactly the same as the name of the CPA (practising) registered with the AFRC.

Chapter 4 Renewal application

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 A CPA (practising) may apply to the AFRC for renewal of his or her practising certificate no later than 15 December of the year in which the current practising certificate expires. The AFRC will generally accept renewal applications from 1 November of each year.

4.2 Renewal criteria

- 4.2.1 The AFRC will not grant a renewal application unless the criteria and requirements set out in paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 above are met.

4.3 Application process

- 4.3.1 The application process described in paragraph 3.3.1 above applies equally to a renewal application.

Stage 1 – Submission of an application

- 4.3.2 A CPA (practising) applying to renew his or her practising certificate is required to complete and submit the online application form "[Renewal Application for a Practising Certificate](#)" (Form PC-2) through the AFRC's Online Application System.
- 4.3.3 Any matter which needs to be notified to the AFRC under Chapter 5 below should be made to the AFRC before the submission of the renewal application.
- 4.3.4 The onus is on the applicant to satisfy the AFRC that the renewal application should be granted.

Application fee

- 4.3.5 The applicant has to pay a renewal application fee in the amount and way specified in the fee schedule published on the AFRC website. The renewal fee is non-refundable.

Stage 2 – Assessment and provision of supplementary information

- 4.3.6 The AFRC will first conduct a preliminary assessment on the renewal application and may require the provision of supplementary information in the manner described in paragraphs 3.3.6 to 3.3.8 above.
- 4.3.7 If the applicant does not provide the required information to the AFRC within the stipulated deadline (i.e. 30 business days from the date of the information request), the AFRC may proceed to make a decision on the renewal application based on the evidence before it, and will likely refuse the renewal application on the basis that there

is insufficient information available for the AFRC to satisfy itself that the issuance criteria have been met.

Processing time

- 4.3.8 Results will usually be available within 30 business days of the date of renewal application, if the AFRC is satisfied that no supplementary information is required for the renewal application. Although the AFRC will strive to adhere to this timetable, the time it takes to process a renewal application may vary depending on a number of factors, including those set out in paragraph 3.3.11 above.
- 4.3.9 The current practising certificate will be extended if the CPA (practising) has made a renewal application but the application is not finally determined before the expiry of the current practising certificate. The current practising certificate will remain in force until:
- (a) if the renewal application is granted – the day on which the renewal takes effect; or
 - (b) if the renewal application is refused – the day on which the refusal takes effect.

Stage 3 – Decision by the AFRC

- 4.3.10 The AFRC will consider all available information in its possession (whether or not provided by the applicant) and then make a decision on the renewal application.
- 4.3.11 The AFRC will inform the applicant of its decision by written notice. In this respect:
- (a) if the renewal application is granted without a condition or is granted subject to a condition as described in paragraph 3.3.15 above – the AFRC will issue a renewed electronic practising certificate to the applicant; or
 - (b) if the renewal application is refused – the AFRC will provide a statement of reasons for the decision in the written notice.
- 4.3.12 The renewal of a practising certificate will take effect on the day specified by the AFRC in the written notice and expire on 31 December of the year in which the renewal takes effect.
- 4.3.13 An applicant who is aggrieved by a decision of the AFRC to refuse the renewal application or grant the renewal application subject to a condition may apply to the Accounting and Financial Reporting Review Tribunal for a review of that decision. The relevant procedures are set out in paragraphs 17 to 18 of the AFRC's ["Outline of the AFRC's Process for the Issuance of Practising Certificates"](#).

Chapter 5 Notification requirements

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 A CPA (practising) is required to observe the following ongoing notification requirements.

5.2 Change in particulars of a CPA (practising)

5.2.1 A CPA (practising) must notify the AFRC of any change in the full name, address of registered office, telephone number or electronic mail address of the CPA (practising) within 14 days of the change. The notification should be made by completing and submitting the notification form "[Notification for Change in Particulars of a CPA \(Practising\)](#)" (Form PC-3) to the AFRC. A CPA (practising) commits an offence if he or she fails to notify the AFRC as required without reasonable excuse.

5.2.2 The notification should be accompanied by the following documents:

- (a) where the CPA (practising) changes his or her name, copies of the new Hong Kong identity card and the certificate of registration as a CPA issued by the HKICPA bearing the new name of the CPA (practising);
 - (i) where the CPA (practising) practises accountancy in his or her own name, a copy of the Business Registration Certificate bearing his or her new name registered with the AFRC; and
- (b) where the CPA (practising) practises accountancy in his or her own name and changes the address of registered office:
 - (i) documentary evidence to prove the ownership of the property such as land search results, if the CPA (practising) is the landlord of the registered office; or
 - (ii) a letter of consent from the landlord or leaseholder authorizing the use of his or her or its premises as the CPA (practising)'s registered office and the erection of a signboard at the entrance to the office, if the CPA (practising) is not the landlord of the registered office; and
 - (iii) a copy of the Business Registration Certificate bearing the new registered office address.

5.3 Change in mode of practice

5.3.1 A CPA (practising) is required to notify the AFRC of any change in the mode of his or her practice within 14 days of the change. The notification should be made to the AFRC by completing and submitting the notification form "[Notification for Change in Particulars of a CPA \(Practising\)](#)" (Form PC-3), together with all necessary supporting documents.

5.3.2 The notification should be accompanied by the following documents:

- (a) where the CPA (practising) changes or adds a mode of practice to practise in his or her own name:
 - (i) a specimen letterhead bearing his or her own name;
 - (ii) a signed "[Confirmation of Erection of a Signboard](#)" (Form PC-SB) confirming the erection of a signboard at the entrance to the registered office;
 - (iii) a copy of the Business Registration Certificate⁹;
 - (iv) where the CPA (practising) practises accountancy in his or her own name and is the landlord of the registered office, documentary evidence to prove the ownership of the property such as land search results; and
 - (v) where the CPA (practising) practises accountancy in his or her own name and is not the landlord of the registered office, a letter of consent from the landlord or leaseholder authorizing the use of his or her or its premises as the CPA (practising)'s registered office and the erection of a signboard at the entrance to the office;
- (b) where the CPA (practising) changes his or her practice from part-time to full-time, documentary evidence to prove his or her resignation from the last employment and that he or she will not engage in other full-time employment;
- (c) where the CPA (practising) changes or adds a mode of practice to practise as a partner or authorized signatory of an existing or proposed CPA firm or a director of an existing or proposed corporate practice, the AFRC will consider the CPA (practising) to have complied with the notification requirement if any of the following applies:
 - (i) the existing CPA firm has notified the AFRC of the relevant change in accordance with paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.3 of the "[Guide for the Registration of Firm Names and Firms](#)";
 - (ii) the proposed CPA firm has submitted a registration application to the AFRC in accordance with Chapter 3 of the "[Guide for the Registration of Firm Names and Firms](#)";
 - (iii) the existing corporate practice has notified the AFRC of the relevant change in accordance with paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.4 of the "[Guide for the Registration of Corporate Practices](#)"; or
 - (iv) the proposed corporate practice has submitted a registration application to the AFRC in accordance with Chapter 3 of the "[Guide for the Registration of Corporate Practices](#)".

⁹ The name of the business stated in the Business Registration Certificate must be the same as the name of the CPA (practising) registered with the AFRC.

5.4 Change to the “Fit and Proper Declaration Form”

5.4.1 A CPA (practising) is required to notify the AFRC, in writing by ways specified in paragraph 2.1.4 above, of the following as soon as practicable:

- (a) the results of any ongoing investigations after completion of the investigations; and
- (b) any conviction of any criminal offence or professional misconduct locally or overseas.

5.5 Bankruptcy or entering into voluntary arrangement

5.5.1 A CPA (practising) is required to notify the AFRC, in writing by ways specified in paragraph 2.1.4 above, if he or she becomes bankrupt or enters into a voluntary arrangement (as defined by section 2 of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6)) with his or her creditors within 14 days of its occurrence.

5.6 Offence of fraudulent procurement of issue of practising certificate

5.6.1 According to section 20AAN of the AFRCO, a person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of HK\$25,000 and to imprisonment for 12 months if the person fraudulently procures the issue of a practising certificate to the person or any other person by means of any misleading, false or fraudulent representation or statement, whether made orally or in writing.

5.6.2 The AFRC may verify or audit any of the information provided in the application form, whether before or after a decision on the application is made.

Chapter 6 Cancellation or suspension of a practising certificate on non-disciplinary grounds

6.1 Cancellation of a practising certificate

- 6.1.1 The AFRC may cancel the practising certificate held by a CPA (practising) if:
- (a) the accountant fails to commence practice within 6 months after the effective date of the practising certificate; or
 - (b) the accountant has become bankrupt or has entered into a voluntary arrangement (as defined by section 2 of the Bankruptcy Ordinance (Cap. 6)) with the accountant's creditors.
- 6.1.2 If the AFRC decides to cancel the practising certificate, the AFRC will inform the CPA (practising) of its decision by written notice. The written notice will include a statement of reasons for the decision.
- 6.1.3 The practising certificate issued to the CPA (practising) is cancelled with effect from the date on which the cancellation takes effect.

6.2 Cancellation or suspension of a practising certificate

- 6.2.1 The AFRC may cancel or suspend the practising certificate held by a CPA (practising) if:
- (a) the accountant requests the AFRC to do so; or
 - (b) the AFRC is satisfied that the practising certificate has been issued by mistake; or in consequence of any misleading, false or fraudulent statement, declaration or representation, whether made orally or in writing; or
 - (c) the AFRC is of the opinion that the accountant has failed to comply with any condition imposed regarding the additional continuing professional development requirements specified in paragraph 3.3.15 above.
- 6.2.2 Where the CPA (practising) intends to cease to practise, the CPA (practising) has to inform the AFRC in writing by ways specified in paragraph 2.1.4 above.
- 6.2.3 If the AFRC decides to cancel or suspend the practising certificate, the procedures set out in paragraphs 6.1.2 and 6.1.3 above apply.

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The AFRC must establish and maintain the register of CPA (practising) ("**Register**") which contains, in relation to each CPA (practising):

- (a) the full name of the accountant;
- (b) the address of the registered office of the accountant;
- (c) the qualification because of which the practising certificate is issued to the accountant; and
- (d) any other particulars that the AFRC considers appropriate.

7.2 Inspection of the Register

7.2.1 A person may inspect free of charge:

- (a) the documentary form of the Register at the AFRC office at office hours; and
- (b) the Register made available on the AFRC website.