



ACCOUNTING CAREER ROADMAP TRACKER (ACRT): STRUCTURED ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLANNING MODEL FOR ACCOUNTING STUDENTS

Nik Zam Nik Wan^{1,*}, Azilawati Abdullah², Abd Aziz², Nor Asmawani Che Hassan³ & Ros Amalina Zakaria⁴

^{1,2,3,4}*Faculty of Accountancy, UiTM Cawangan Kelantan*

**Corresponding author: nikzam@uitm.edu.my*

ABSTRACT

The Accounting Career Roadmap Tracker (ACRT) is a structured academic and career planning innovation developed to address the lack of direction among accounting students, particularly during the early stage of university life. Many students begin higher education without clear expectations of each study phase, leading to low motivation, inconsistent performance, and difficulty managing academic and emotional challenges. The ACRT provides a systematic semester-based roadmap that guides students from programme entry to professional readiness. It covers key developmental stages such as foundation building, performance enhancement, experiential learning, and career preparation. Implemented through Google Forms, the tracker enables continuous monitoring of academic progress, skill development, and career awareness while encouraging self-assessment, reflection, and goal setting. By helping students track progress and identify areas for improvement, the ACRT promotes proactive and self-directed learning behaviours. Ultimately, the innovation contributes to producing resilient, competitive, and career-ready Bumiputera accounting professionals capable of succeeding in a demanding professional environment.

KEYWORDS: Accounting Education, Academic Roadmap, Career Planning, Student Development.

INTRODUCTION

In higher education, particularly in accounting programmes, students often encounter significant challenges in navigating their academic journey due to the absence of clear direction and structured guidance. Many students enter university without a comprehensive understanding of what is expected of them at each stage of their studies, including the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for academic success and future career development. This lack of clarity often results in low motivation, inconsistent academic performance, and difficulties in coping with demanding subjects, emotional pressures, and uncertainties related to career pathways (Tinto, 1993; Zimmerman, 2002).

The situation becomes more critical when students adopt reactive learning behaviours, focusing primarily on short-term academic requirements rather than long-term academic and professional



growth. Consequently, students may struggle to sustain their performance, lose focus over time, and fail to fully realise their potential.

In response to these challenges, the Accounting Career Roadmap Tracker (ACRT) is introduced as a structured and practical intervention that provides a clear, semester-based pathway for students. By aligning academic milestones with career planning, the model aims to transform students into proactive, goal-oriented individuals who can manage their academic journey in a more structured and purposeful manner.

PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVE

Despite the availability of academic support systems in higher education institutions, many accounting students continue to face challenges in managing their academic journey effectively due to the lack of a structured and personalised development pathway. Students often do not have a clear understanding of what they need to achieve at each stage of their studies, which leads to ineffective planning, reduced motivation, and inconsistent academic performance (Broadbent et al., 2021). This issue is further compounded when students encounter complex accounting subjects, emotional disturbances, and uncertainties regarding their future career direction, increasing their risk of disengagement and academic underperformance (UNESCO, 2021; Broadbent et al., 2021).

Therefore, this innovation aims to develop a structured and practical roadmap through the Accounting Career Roadmap Tracker (ACRT) that guides students across semesters in a systematic manner. Specifically, the objectives of this innovation are to (i) provide clear guidance on academic and career expectations at each stage of study, (ii) support students in planning their academic progression strategically, (iii) enhance students' motivation, focus, and resilience in facing academic and emotional challenges, and (iv) reduce the risk of academic failure while improving overall student performance and career readiness.

DESIGN DESCRIPTION

The Accounting Career Roadmap Tracker (ACRT) is a semester-based academic and career planning model designed to guide accounting students from university entry to their transition into the professional world. Its purpose is to provide students with a clear and structured pathway for academic progression, personal development, and career readiness, addressing the common issue of students lacking direction throughout their studies.

The ACRT is organised into four developmental phases: foundation building, performance enhancement, advancement, and professional readiness. Each phase outlines expected achievements, self-assessment criteria, and reflective activities that enable students to monitor their progress and take ownership of their development. The model is implemented through two platforms: a visual roadmap poster (A2/A3 size) that serves as a continuous reference and checklist tool, and a digital tracking system using Google Forms for semester-based monitoring of academic performance, motivation, and career awareness.

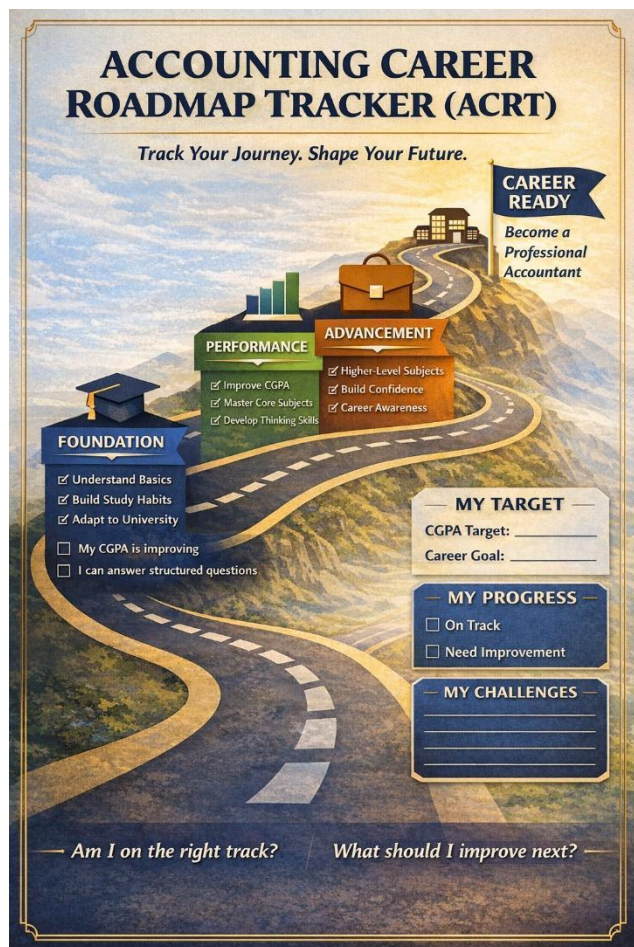
The tracker is structured by semesters to provide more accurate monitoring of student growth. Early semesters focus on adaptation, study discipline, and basic accounting knowledge; middle semesters



emphasise academic improvement and analytical skills; later semesters focus on career awareness and confidence building; while the final semester centres on internship and professional readiness.

VISUALS

The ACRT is illustrated through a visual roadmap poster representing the student journey from foundation to career readiness.



NOVELTY AND UNIQUENESS

The Accounting Career Roadmap Tracker (ACRT) introduces a structured and practical semester-based roadmap that systematically aligns students' academic progression with long-term career outcomes. Unlike conventional academic support approaches that are often general, reactive, and fragmented, the ACRT provides a clearly defined and progressive pathway that specifies what students are expected to achieve at each semester of their study. This structured approach reduces ambiguity in students' academic journey and promotes a more proactive and goal-oriented learning behaviour.

One of the key novelties of the ACRT lies in its integration of academic planning and career development within a single framework. While most existing practices treat academic performance and career readiness as separate domains, the ACRT explicitly connects both elements by guiding students to align their academic efforts with future professional requirements. This ensures that students are not only focused on passing examinations but are also consciously preparing themselves for the

expectations of the accounting profession. Overall, the ACRT represents an innovative shift from passive academic guidance to an active, structured, and data-informed student development system, making it both scalable and adaptable across different academic programmes and institutions.

BENEFITS TO MANKIND

The ACRT addresses a critical gap in student development by providing structured guidance that enhances motivation, clarity, and resilience among accounting students. By helping students manage academic challenges, emotional pressures, and career uncertainty, the ACRT improves their overall learning experience and academic performance. The model contributes to producing graduates who are more confident, career-ready, and adaptable, thereby supporting the development of high-quality human capital.



COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL

The ACRT demonstrates strong commercial potential due to its scalability and adaptability across higher education institutions. It can be developed into digital platforms, training modules, or consultancy-based student development programmes. The ACRT offers a sustainable and cost-effective solution for educational institutions seeking to enhance student performance and employability.

CONCLUSION

ACRT presents a structured and practical innovation that addresses a critical gap in student development, particularly in guiding accounting students throughout their academic journey. By transforming a traditionally unstructured and reactive learning experience into a systematic and goal-oriented pathway, the ACRT enables students to gain clarity, direction, and purpose from the early stages of their studies. The ACRT empowers students to become more proactive, self-regulated, and resilient in managing academic and personal challenges.

Ultimately, the ACRT goes beyond being a simple planning tool; it functions as a strategic developmental framework that fosters long-term academic success and professional readiness. This innovation contributes to the development of resilient, competitive, and career-ready Bumiputera accounting professionals who are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern professional environment. Its scalability and adaptability further highlight its potential for broader implementation across disciplines and institutions.

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