

Developing talent in the Middle East

To meet our clients' needs and fulfil our purpose, we need the best talent everywhere we do business. That's why we're committed to developing our people.

A great example of this commitment in action is in the United Arab Emirates, where PwC Middle East runs a programme under the name of 'Watani', Arabic for 'National'.

The Watani Graduate Programme offers an opportunity for UAE Nationals to join PwC Middle East, where they work and study for three years in both the UAE and the UK. Watani is the only professional services programme dedicated to helping UAE Nationals gain an internationally recognised qualification – the ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) – while also gaining international experience in a developed market.

The programme has been hugely successful in developing local talent for PwC Middle East.

Ali AlShahi, one of the many graduates who has benefitted from the programme, comments: "I can confidently say that this has been one of the most enriching experiences of my professional career. The support from the firm's leadership team throughout my career path is unconditional, which has also helped me grow significantly in the professional services field. They have made a conscious effort to invest in our education and our future."

Given its success, the Watani Client Secondment Programme was launched in 2016. This provides PwC Middle East's clients, mainly in UAE, and at a later stage across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the opportunity to send their people to work with PwC and gain a

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Ali AlShahi

globally-recognised professional qualification. The secondment programme was created in response to multiple requests from clients, and has been enthusiastically received.

In September 2016, the firm received the 'Pioneering Awards' from the UAE Ministry of Economy for attracting, hiring and training UAE Nationals in the Accounting and Auditing Profession. This achievement is a stepping stone for PwC Middle East and is in line with the UAE Government's vision of having 100 UAE Nationals qualified by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) by 2021.