



# *Wilfred Downing MSt ACA*

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**Business Appointment:** Tax Consultant, Deloitte

## **Personal introduction**

I'm sure like many of us I never imagined myself having a career in tax & accounting when I was younger – there were no early Christmases spent unwrapping my own copy of the latest Financial Reporting Standard!

I'm a northern boy by origin and temperament who ventured south for university. Although not necessarily a natural progression after four years of studying history, I joined Deloitte as a tax graduate in September 2016 (cementing my reputation amongst my siblings as the “wild child”).

The last four years have been spent helping clients with a wide range of different tax & accounting related matters, with a particular focus on clients operating in the pensions and funds area, alongside studying towards achieving my ACA/CTA qualifications (now completed).

I'm very fortunate to have spent these last few years engaged in work I enjoy, working with some of the best people (personally and professionally) – I'd say that is my career highlight so far.

## **Your involvement with ICAEW**

I've been involved with the ICAEW since February 2018 when I became a student member as I started studying towards my chartered accountancy qualification. After passing my final exams, I've been a full ICAEW member since spring of this year. Becoming a member of this world-leading professional body ranks as one of my proudest achievements to date.

Through both my studies and day-to-day work, I've met many other ICAEW members (longstanding and new, alike), often benefitting from the knowledge they've shared.

Naturally, the opportunities to network have been limited over recent months but going forwards, I can't think of a better way to meet other members and stay involved in our professional community – as well as working to strengthen it – than by serving on the ICAEW Council.

## **Motivation and ability to be a member of Council**

My motivation for standing is a spirit of volunteerism. Whether at school, university or at work, I've always believed in pitching in and helping out, especially if you have something to contribute. That's the only way communities, including ours, can thrive. I believe that I have energy, enthusiasm and a fresh perspective to offer.

Balancing different commitments has never been an issue and that's been demonstrated most recently by my progression from graduate to manager at Deloitte, whilst passing almost two dozen exams in total and enjoying life living in one of the greatest cities in the world.

Throughout my four year term I'd fulfil my obligations as a Council member – representing my constituency members and holding the Board to account – by taking the same approach as I've always done: working with others and giving the time to a task that's needed to see it through and do it well.

## **Strategic focus**

As a Council member my strategic focus would be on the following:

- 1. Studies & exams** – supporting our student members by ensuring that the curriculum they follow is focused on practical and relevant learning that will equip them with the skills and knowledge they need in their day-to-day work to be effective tax & accounting professionals;
- 2. Young members** – we're currently experiencing uniquely challenging times, with businesses in every economic sector being hit. In these circumstances, it's more important than ever that as a world-leading professional organisation and committed community, we do all we can to protect the talent pipeline; in particular, by identifying and offering practical support to help our new and aspiring members; and
- 3. Member engagement** – this means demonstrating the value of the ICAEW to members, in particular, showing that membership means more than a qualification. For example, by providing members with market-relevant technical updates and the best networking opportunities, we'll be able to demonstrate that membership can be the springboard for technical brilliance and career progression. Through this we can engage existing and new members to build a stronger and broader-based professional community known for its high achievers and expertise.

## **Communication with members in your constituency**

The best way to represent members is to listen to what they have to say. This is why I'll always be accessible to my constituents through email, mobile, social media and of course, face-to-face once the world returns to normal.

In my experience, a lot of issues could be resolved if only those with the power to fix them knew that the problems existed in the first place. That's why I'll be a vocal attendee at all Council meetings to make sure that what my constituents have to say is heard. One of my strengths is my ability to work with people and I'll use the skills I've learned to engage with key stakeholders so that issues aren't only discussed, but we find solutions as well.

To be elected to serve on the Council would be an honour and I'd repay that trust by doing my best by my constituents.

**Nominators**

David Cohen  
Toby Broadhurst  
William East  
Elizabeth Instance  
Fiona Maurice

## *Declaration of interests which are relevant to the business of ICAEW*

Membership of, or interests in, formal bodies or groups, including other professional bodies <sup>i</sup> :	Student member of the Chartered Institute of Taxation.
Membership of ICAEW Council, ICAEW Boards and other ICAEW committees:	None
Partnerships, Directorships or beneficial interests in companies:	None
Professional or social relationships with individuals who have business relationships or who compete with the ICAEW:	None
Any other matters you feel should be identified:	None

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<sup>i</sup> This includes employment by a professional body.