

# Road to membership

As you approach the end of your ACA training agreement, you may be wondering about the next step – becoming an ICAEW member. Xenia Taliotis gets to grips with the process and what membership offers

**F**or John Howarth, senior accountant at Kenneth Easby, there was no question that he wouldn't join ICAEW after he qualified in 2014. "The way I looked at membership was that I had sweated blood to qualify and I wanted to be able to use those hard-earned letters, ACA, after my name," he says.

But becoming a member was about more than just the letters. From contacts to resources, Howarth believes membership will allow him to be supported throughout his career. "Since joining, membership has provided me with many opportunities to meet people in the profession, and to continue learning. There are loads of additional courses and certificates that you can take, each one giving you more knowledge and understanding of a given subject. I also subscribe to a few of the faculties and I use online resources a lot.

"It's very rare that I don't find the answer to what I'm looking for."

Nikki Campbell-Gumb, head of member strategy and reporting at ICAEW reiterates what membership can offer.

"Your qualification sets you apart as a member of a highly influential and respected professional body which connects you to a wider global community of financial experts.

"This means you're well placed to pursue the most interesting and rewarding opportunities at every stage of your career"

She adds: "ICAEW is here to support members throughout their careers. There is something for everyone, whichever career paths they have chosen.

"The ACA is well respected throughout the world and acts as a passport to anywhere, while membership provides an invaluable network for newly qualified accountants to advance their careers through the connections they make.

"We are keen to create opportunities for members to meet each other and connect with their fellow professionals."

## STAYING AHEAD

In addition, says Campbell-Gumb, ICAEW also provides a wealth of technical and ethical advisory services. "ICAEW's information resources are second to none. There's

a world-class library and information service, which members can visit, contact by phone, email or find what they are looking for via the ICAEW website. There are seven faculties providing technical insight on topics such as tax, audit and assurance and financial reporting, as well as 14 special interest groups, from healthcare and insolvency to charity and solicitors."

More than 45,000 members subscribe to one or more of the faculties and over 20,000 subscribe to a special interest group. In addition to being an indispensable knowledge bank the faculties also provide excellent networking opportunities.

Career development is also a major benefit of your membership.

"ICAEW helps members progress professionally," says Campbell-Gumb, "We offer numerous training courses and additional qualifications through the ICAEW Academy of Professional Development. These are designed for finance professionals at every stage of your career to build not just your technical skills but also your leadership, commercial and business partnering capabilities."

## Top tips for when you are applying to become an ICAEW member

**1 NEED HELP TO PROGRESS** up your professional development ladders? You can access webinars and past *Vital* articles on each professional development area at [icaew.com/listenagain](http://icaew.com/listenagain)

**2 UPDATE YOUR PRACTICAL WORK EXPERIENCE** in your online training file in six-month blocks and review the number of days at each six monthly review meeting with your employer or principal. Make sure that the days you enter are for the full period of your training agreement – don't leave gaps.

**"I wanted to be able to use those hard-earned letters, ACA, after my name"**

**3 COMPLETE THE ONLINE** ethics learning programme during your training and achieve a 70% or more score within the devolved assessment. Remember to speak to your employer or principal before you take the assessment.

**4 AT EACH REVIEW,** you need to complete your ethics and professional scepticism progress and your ethical training progress with the comments from your employer or principal.

**5 KEEP YOUR CONTACT DETAILS** up to date to receive information from ICAEW. You can update your details via your online training file at [icaew.com/trainingfile](http://icaew.com/trainingfile)

If you have a question about your ACA training or becoming a member call **+44 (0)1908 248 250** or email [studentsupport@icaew.com](mailto:studentsupport@icaew.com). For more information, go online [icaew.com/apply](http://icaew.com/apply)

**ICAEW membership is your passport to a career full of opportunity**

## HOW TO DO IT

"Becoming a member of ICAEW is straightforward," says Gemma Honhold, senior manager in the applications team at ICAEW, "all you need to do is keep your training records up to date." She advises recording practical work experience days in six-month blocks, explaining how you meet each professional development skill over the seven ladders and how you apply ethics in your day-to-day role. "You'll be doing this over the duration of your training agreement, so it's all very manageable. This will mean your training file is current, and will make it easy for ICAEW to check and verify once it's submitted at the end of your training agreement."

As the last day of your training agreement nears, make sure you've set up your final review meeting with your employer or principal and check that all your records are up to date. Your employer or principal will then need to verify your training records before they are sent to ICAEW. Once they've been checked, your invitation to membership will be emailed and you can become a member straight away. It's as simple as that – you'll just need to complete an online application and pay your admission and membership fees within 12 months (from your eligibility date). ■