

# Realise your Future

Now entering its fifth year, ACCA Realise delivers benefits right across the membership base, as Luke Brockie, Head of Members' Services, explains

ACCA Realise, the CPD requirement for all ACCA members, has been extremely successful since its launch in January 2005. Each year, 98 per cent of members in Ireland submit their CPD declarations regularly and CPD activity reviews confirm that members are sourcing appropriate and relevant learning activities.

The different CPD services on offer are also proving popular: 60 per cent of members in Ireland are using the online tool to make the CPD declaration each year, with the rest choosing the paper-based format; and 60 per cent are using the online evidence recording tool.

In 2008 ACCA undertook evaluation, research and consultation to ensure that ACCA Realise remains effective and relevant. A global membership survey sought feedback on CPD and 5,800 members responded globally, including 400 from members based in Ireland. The survey findings will be used to steer ACCA's ongoing approach to CPD support, services and guidance.

The key findings for Ireland are:

#### The key benefits of undertaking CPD

The consultation confirmed broad support for ACCA Realise. Those responding indicated that undertaking CPD had two key benefits: it helps to maintain the knowledge and skills needed for current roles (72 per cent); and it helps to maintain professional and ethical standards (68 per cent).

#### The CPD process: how to gain further value

A small proportion, however, may not be gaining maximum value because of issues around planning their learning activity. According to the survey, 14 per cent of respondents do not plan, but then find themselves doing all their CPD at the end of the year. It helps with the planning process, and benefits every career, to consider learning and development in relation to

current job role and future career aspirations. The concept of planning CPD activity to complement individual career needs and/or aspirations is clearly an area in which ACCA can offer more support and guidance.

#### A thirst for both technical and business learning

The consultation confirmed that members continue to look to ACCA for both technical learning and business skills development. The most popular technical learning needs were in the areas of corporate finance and financial management, risk, taxation and financial reporting; and the most popular business skills needs were in the areas of leadership, strategy, communications and analysis.

#### Coaching and Mentoring: a new consideration

Coaching and mentoring are activities which 70 per cent of respondents in Ireland now undertake, either formally or informally; there seems to be a lack of awareness, however, that it can count towards an individual's CPD requirement. We look forward to providing our members with wider support on coaching and mentoring during 2009.

#### How ACCA can support you with CPD

As well as increasing guidance on planning CPD and coaching and mentoring, members also requested more guidance and support from ACCA on the following:

#### How to achieve verifiable CPD

How learning activities (other than face-to-face events) contribute towards CPD, for example: learning at work; clarifying how CPD links into career development and progression; promoting CPD to employers; and ensuring that, where possible, ACCA provides learning opportunities where the employer cannot.

These are all areas in which we will focus on providing more support to our members, both in *Accounting Matters* and across other mediums, throughout 2009.

The annual CPD declaration for 2008 is Your

## ACCA Events Programme 2009

Members continue to support ACCA Ireland events in large numbers. The 2009 programme has been designed to meet the widest possible training needs and courses include full day training for members working in the corporate, financial services, practice and public sectors. We also offer a wide range of shorter courses and business lectures at 16 locations throughout Ireland.

In addition to relevant CPD, members also enjoy the opportunity to network with colleagues at all events. You may be familiar with the ACCA CPD programmes and to complement these, we are introducing a number of firsts in 2009: a Business Leaders' Forum breakfast in Cork, a Corporate Sector course in Galway and a Financial Services Course in Limerick.

Full details of all these events are listed in the 2009 CPD events programme which will be issued to members in early December. A listing of events in the January/February/March period is outlined on pages 24 - 25.

If you have any queries on CPD, events or other matters please contact the Members' Services team at 01 4988 900 or [members@ie.accaglobal.com](mailto:members@ie.accaglobal.com) We look forward to welcoming you to many of our events in 2009.

**Luke Brockie,**  
Head of Members' Services