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Change is coming...

I recently rocked up at the House of Commons (not in this outfit) to see PQ columnist Professor Prem Sikka present two reports he has written for the Labour Party. He told a packed committee room that the audit profession is 'highly dysfunctional' and abolishing the FRC does not go far enough. Sikka is calling on the Big 4 to be structurally broken up into separate legal entities, where audit firms just do audit. He wants audit rotation every five years and all audit bids to be made public. Sikka was joined by the shadow Chancellor John McDonnell and shadow Business Secretary Rebecca Long Bailey. As we have said in our news story (see page 6), McDonnell was adamant that "change is going to come" and that self-regulation of the profession was a historic hangover that needed addressing. He also revealed that it had been a long-held tradition that audit firms offered opposition parties their staff. That practice has been 'cleared out', he said. The fear of corporate capture was a real concern.

And the winner is...

It was also the PQ awards this month – the front cover may be a give away here. We had nearly 300 people laughing (and crying) the night away, including me! Compere for the evening was the wonderful Tom Ward. He was hoping to pick out three great haircuts in the audience (just check his hair on page 18 – he looks like a Lego man!). But there wasn't anyone with dramatic hair, so he went for best dressed accountant instead. People loved his act, and the winners revelled in their glory – although I would have put Claudia and her pink ensemble first. You can check out our best dressed trio on page 30. Check out the awards video on our Facebook page – @pqmags.

Graham Hambly, PQ magazine editor (graham@pqaccountant.com)

rogo

Tutors, are you spending too much time checking "10" = "£10.00"?



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HAVE YOUR SAY

The living dead

I read your article headlined 'A Blinkered Approach' that featured a device that wraps around the head, both cutting out noise and obstructing peripheral vision (PQ magazine, February 2019).

The first thing that came to my mind was, why not just work from home or in a quiet zone? I am afraid that we may become zombies when we want to cut out most/all human interaction and connection, all in the name of avoiding distractions. Isn't it a coincidence that in the same



issue of PQ, on the previous page, was an article headed 'Show



some emotion'?

The second thing that came to my mind was the health and safety risk when such a device is worn at

the workplace. This is one reason employees are advised not to listen to loud music at work – just imagine the sight and sounds that are blocked with this device! You have to be aware of what is going on in your environment.

There can be more human ways of handling office distractions and managing our time.
Mustafa Yusuf-Adebola, by email

The editor says: And you don't even mention the price – these sensory blockers will set you back £200! So are we becoming a nation of zombies? Let us know.

Our star letter writer wins a fantastic PQ mug!

What you said about the PQ awards 2019

I didn't win but it was a marvellous experience being nominated by the prestigious PQ magazine that is read by thousands of part qualified accountants as student mentor for 2019.

So grateful to Graham Hambly, PQ's editor, for such a wonderful event at the Café de Paris in Leicester Square. To all the wonderful professionals from all the accountancy bodies I met, ACCA, ICAEW, CIMA and AAT, thank you.

Pan Fouli

... I was honoured to have been nominated for #PQawards, but to win was the best feeling and I am truly ecstatic! Thanks you PQ magazine for this and such a brilliant night! And thank you my incredible team @elhtfinance for all of your support #financefamily
Rebecca Dixon

... Had a fantastic time last night at the PQ magazine awards in London Town. It was great to see so many familiar faces in the industry and new people also, and even meet colleagues at the ACCA. To top it off, our ACCA distance learning Facebook group won the Editor's Award. Well done to



everyone who was nominated and won an award.

Natalie Adele

... Brilliant to win Study Resource of the Year at last night's PQ magazine awards for our AAT Level 2 course. Huge

congratulations to all my team at Mindful Education – nearly three years of determination and hard work to create the product we imagined – so this is absolutely fabulous! I could not be more proud.

Mark McKenna

social media ROUND-UP



The day after Valentine's Day LSBF tv went live with another set of great 'programmes' for AAT studiers. We really like this initiative and so do many of you, too!

Maxine Feehelly thanked us for the link. She said: "I have just watched a couple of the old ones for some parts of MAC that hadn't quite clicked. I feel far more confident about my exam on Tuesday now." Neica-Louise Morrow agreed, and said it made her feel confident that her exam was do-able now. There's still time to sign up for the last few shows. They will be taking place on Friday 22 March, Friday 29 March and Friday 5 April. Go to <https://web.lsbftv.org.uk/lsbf-tv> to register.

Paula Rutter also has the right idea of how to take a break from the ardours of AAT study! As 'blue feet AATQB' she says: "Time for a break with @PQmagazine #SaturdayAfternoon."



There was a great chat about how you choose a business name on Accounting & Bookkeeping Support (AAT, ICB, Students & Qualified) too. Miranda Toppin was going to call the company MJT Accountancy, but wasn't 100% sure. Jenny Waller used the name of a street she used to live in and Coral Rogers looked up her initials in the periodic table and came up with Chromium Bookkeeping. Chromium is nice and shiny and she likes shiny things!

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Contributors: **Robert Bruce, Prem Sikka, Zoe Robinson, Mike Day, Tony Kelly, Phil Gammon, Edward Netherton** |
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ROBERT BRUCE



Auditors must once again stand firm

One of the roots of unrest with auditing is the perceived lack of backbone among auditors. It didn't used to be like this. History tells a different story.

The villain who charmed his way through the business world over the last 50 years of the last century was Robert Maxwell. With hindsight it is hard to see how he pulled it off. But he was a bully, and bullies manage to keep the critics at bay for much longer than they should. When he got his comeuppance in 1971 it was a stinging one. Long before the scrutiny of business by government became the feeble thing it is today there used to be the feared Department of Trade and Industry reports. Sir Ronald Leach, senior chap at Peat Marwick (the forerunner KPMG), was the accountant reporting on Maxwell. Leach's words defined the backbone that accountants should bring to their role: "Mr Maxwell regarded his stewardship duties fulfilled by showing the maximum profits which any transaction could be devised to show," he said. He concluded: "Notwithstanding Mr Maxwell's acknowledged abilities and energy, he is not in our opinion a person who can be relied upon to exercise proper stewardship of a publicly quoted company." Leach stuck to his principles – Peats never did any work for Maxwell again. It was only 20 years later, after Maxwell's death, that further scandals broke over how he had plundered his workers' pensions. Coopers & Lybrand, now PwC, got it in the neck that time. There is a lot to be said for standing firm in the face of dubious behaviour.

Robert Bruce is an award-winning writer on accountancy for The Times

ACCA feedback

'A badboy', 'nasty' and 'horrible' is how PQs described ATX this time around. Several students admitted they didn't manage to complete the March exam, and were upset because they had put so much time into their study.

Many found SBL 'exhausting' too, and one PQ just said 'wow!' Students were genuinely worried that they didn't spend long enough reading, planning or even thinking. As one said: "I feel like there was so much to do in this exam... I was writing continually for pretty much all the time."

When it came to AA and AAA, most March candidates felt they

were 'fairer' this sitting. These papers had some of the worst pass rates last time around, so students and tutors will hope to see an improvement on the 38% and 31% December rates come 15 April.

The APM December pass rate was 33%, and time was again the enemy for many. There were, however, few complaints about the Spring test. PM got a more mixed reaction. Parts A and B were mostly OK. It all depended on what questions you got in section C, and there was a lot of question envy on the noticeboards.

• See www.pqmagazine.com for all our exam feedback.



Cheers! Keith Windross told us he "had to find an innovative solution to recover from ATX". Seems to be working, he said!

'Inconvenient' news

What happens when an accountancy body loses your exam script? Well, PQ magazine recently came across the case of an ACCA student whose Applied Skills exam paper 'went missing' in December.

The student, bizarrely, first found out that they would not be issued with a result when the

ACCA offered them a £30 goodwill gesture! They were told: "Your exam answer responses have been reviewed and regrettably we are unable to issue you with a result based on the information that has been received in relation to your exam." The letter went on: "We realise that this will be

disappointing news and would like to apologise for any distress this may cause. In recognition of the inconvenience caused we have applied a further £30 goodwill gesture to your MyACCA account."

We wondered if this was an isolated incident and would love to hear from any students who have suffered a similar fate. Contact PQ in confidence – email graham@pqaccountant.com with your story.

Training contracts on the increase

The number of trainees on contracts with the UK's top 75 accountancy firms is approaching 20,000, says new research from Accountancy Daily.

The survey found that there are currently 19,887 trainees studying to become qualified accountants, tax advisers or consultants at these top firms. This represents a 4% increase on the corresponding figures for last year.



The Big 4 firms account for 12,884 of the total, with PwC increasing its student numbers by

18% to 4,275, which represents 20% of the total for the top 75. PwC's Louise Farra told Accountancy Daily: "Student recruitment is the bread-and-butter of the firm. We will be taking on 1,300 graduates and 200 school leavers for this coming year, with about 60% of these roles outside London. And we have seen large growth in opportunities around technology."

In brief

Change is coming

Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell (right) has warned audit firms that change is coming. At the launch of two policy-making reports on accountancy he said the number of occasions where audits are undertaken by junior members of staff or even trainees is 'staggering'. He felt there was an element of exploitation here. He also promised legislation to reform audit in a Labour government's first Queen's Speech.



Happy birthday CIMA

On Friday 8 March, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants celebrated its 100th birthday. CIMA President Steven Swientozielskyj said: "In 1919, a new breed of accountant was created to help industry leaders deal with the challenges of the early 20th century. One hundred years later CIMA members and students are at the cutting edge of finance, driving business transformation."

CIMA
100

Workload blamed for tragedy

The widow of an accountancy lecturer who killed himself has said her husband, Malcolm Anderson, was unable to cope with his workload. The deputy head of accounting at Cardiff University fell to his death from a university building in February last year. The inquest was told he left a note describing the pressures he felt from his job and long hours.

CIPFA forges US links

CIPFA and Rutgers University Business School have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to create a pathway for the university's students and graduates to practice government accounting outside the United States. Rutgers' students on the Master of Accountancy in Government Accounting programme will have the opportunity to qualify with CIPFA via its online platform. The first session will be open to the September 2019 intake.



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PREM SIKKA



State needs to rebuild post-Brexit economy

Whatever the outcome of Brexit, the UK needs to change its economic path. The government policies of corporation tax cuts and low interest rates have not produced higher investment or productivity.

The UK invests 16.9% of its GDP in productive assets, compared with the average of 20.1% for the EU. UK R&D expenditure is 1.5% – 1.7% of GDP, compared with the EU average of 2% (about half the level of Sweden).

The shareholder-centric model of corporate governance encourages obsession with short-term returns. In 1970, major UK firms paid about £10 of each £100 of profits in dividends. By 2015, it reached between £60 and £70, often accompanied by a squeeze on labour and investment. UK companies pay a higher proportion of their earnings in dividends compared with their counterparts from the EU, Japan and the US. A Bank of England survey showed that around 25% of finance raised by companies is spent on investment, with the remainder split between purchasing financial assets, distribution to shareholders and keeping it as cash. Low investment has resulted in low productivity. The output per hour worked in the UK is about 16% below the average for the rest of the G7 advanced economies.

The private sector has shown little appetite for long-term investment and risks. The state has to reform corporate governance and play a direct role in steering the economy by renewing social infrastructure and investing in manufacturing, green and new technologies.

Prem Sikka is Emeritus Professor of Accounting at the University of Essex

Blockchain your certificates

ICAS has revealed it is trialing the use of blockchain technology to issue digital certificates to its newly qualifieds, with the help of PwC and its Smart Credential platform.

All staff who have qualified with ICAS at the Big 4 firm in the past two years are being given access to a virtual wallet. This allows owners complete control over sharing their professional credentials digitally, reducing the exposure to fraud.

ICAS CEO Bruce Cartwright said: "Our newly qualified members

involved in this trial can now take control of their personal data by replacing the paper-based certificate with a secure digital version. Not only this, but the technology allows instant verification of their credentials, putting an end to the back-and-forth involved in establishing good standing and ensuring our members can get on with their jobs."

Steve Davies, global blockchain leader at PwC, explained: "The ability to prove your identity online is

critical in today's digital world and the same is true of the qualifications you hold." He admitted that, like many others, he takes pride in the certificate hanging on his wall – but you cannot take it down and share it when you need to.

However, the demand for verified, trusted and irrefutable identities from many different types of organisations is rising. Potential employers, in particular, want to ensure that an applicant holds the credentials listed on their CVs.

You need stamina to get SBL pass

Do you have the stamina to pass the ACCA SBL exam? In the most recent Examiner's Report, the examiner said they were worried there were 'indications' that sitters are running out of stamina during the four-hour test. The examiner stressed it was also noticeable that the quality of answers tailed off towards the end of the exam.

The examiner is strongly recommending that students take mock exams before the real thing, under exam conditions, to get used to the demands on concentration, thinking and writing that the longer



exam requires. Students are also showing the examiner which questions they are struggling with most. The examiner said: "Mostly, candidates answered the questions in order. Where they did not they appeared to be leaving one question, which they liked least, until the end." trialing The concern here is that in future exams the examiner has said the questions may follow a timeline or have question requirements that progress in other ways. That means you are getting a direct recommendation to answer the requirements in order.

AAT software 'issues'

AAT students have been contacting PQ magazine about software issues with their AAT exam centres.

One told us that on attending her local testing centre recently she was faced with Sage software from 2014. It took the centre over an hour to install Sage 50, which she was told was 'available' at the time of booking.

The concern for students is that,

once centres are accredited to host exams by AAT, how often they are visited to ensure they are providing a proper service and keeping their software up-to-date.

PQ would like to hear from any other students who suffered a similar fate. Send your stories to graham@pqaccountant.com.



Code rejig

The FRC is looking create a new Stewardship code, setting out more rigorous requirements for reporting. The code will refer to environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors. Signatories are also expected to take material issues into account when fulfilling their stewardship responsibilities. And investors must report how their purpose, values and culture enable them to meet their obligations.

In brief

Darting ahead

Former trainee accountant Nathan Aspinall (pictured) has found another way to use his maths skills. 'The Asp', who has exchanged his calculator for arrows, recently won the Ladbrokes UK Open, and is now ranked 34th in the PDC order of merit. Aspinall started in 2018 at Qualifying School in order to win his tour card, and got to the semi-final on his World Championship debut, earning £100,000



to boot. He added another £100k to his bank account with the UK Open prize money.

Bank accounts frozen

The bank accounts of 95 Chinese students containing an estimated £3.6m were recently frozen in a day of action co-ordinated by the newly formed National Economic Crime Centre (NECC). The money in the accounts is suspected to be either the proceeds of crime or

intended to be used for criminal purposes. The accounts are held mainly by overseas students studying in the UK, who may be unaware that operating a bank account in this manner is potentially illegal, said the NECC.

Whistleblowing heaven

The US IRS collected a record-breaking \$1.441bn in taxes, penalties and interest thanks to information provided by whistleblowers. That's up from \$190m in 2017. The IRS said that

whistleblowers had received \$112m in awards, a rise of \$33m on the previous year. One group of whistleblowers who exposed significant corporate tax evasion were awarded \$62m.

CIMA 2019 syllabus

CIMA's exam blueprints for the 2019 OT and case study syllabus have now been released. In a new timeline the next big announcements will be the 2020 exam timetable release on 29 April. Check out more on page 24.

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ZOE ROBINSON



The growing importance of lifelong learning

CIMA launched its 2019 Professional Qualification Syllabus in January. Although hosted by humans, their special guest was Pepper the robot, a social humanoid that can recognise faces and basic emotions. Its purpose was to illustrate how far technology has come, and to challenge a few perceptions. If a robot can communicate with an audience, how long before it can do my job?

CIMA has placed digital skills at the centre of the new competency framework, with other skills remaining effectively the same. While this is a direct acknowledgment of the impact technology is having, CIMA is not the only one looking to the future; all the professional bodies recognise the importance of digital skills and are already engaged. ICAEW have Digital Essentials, a new corporate service that offers finance professionals the know-how to better understand AI, blockchain and cyber security. ACCA is running CPD sessions helping professionals get to grips with big data and data analytics.

There was a time when a newly qualified accountant was up-to-date with the latest thinking and technical skills. Not anymore. The workplace is moving at pace: drones conduct stocktakes and AI conducts analysis of non-traditional sources for audit purposes. Accountancy practices are a world away from where they were just a few years ago, and the need for lifelong learning has never been greater. We are all involved in a digital race that is getting faster. Don't be left behind.

Zoe Robinson is Learning and Programmes Director at Kaplan Financial

Don't reschedule if you want to pass

Thinking of rescheduling your CIMA OTs? Well, be careful: new research shows students who reschedule their CIMA exams are 16% less likely to pass than those that book an exam date and stay with it.

The study, by Kaplan and CIMA, shows while the pass rate of students sticking to their original exam date is 77%, this falls to 61% for those who reschedule.

The stats also show a steady decline in pass rates from the end of the course to sitting the exam. Pass rates fell by 6% after the third week and by a further 10% by

week six. The recommendation is that you sit the exam within three weeks of finishing your course to maximise your chances of passing.

Students who attempted both short tests and mock exams had 5% higher pass rates than those who did neither. However, when you sit exams has no effect on pass rates. Apparently, there isn't a 'lucky time' to sit exams. The researchers also wondered if exemptions influenced pass rates. Again, the short answer is no – exemptions of five or less make little difference to pass rates.

Call for new charter



The time is right for a national 'Women in Business Charter', says the AAT. The Women in Finance Charter was launched way back in 2016 and some 300 financial services firms, including the AAT, have signed up. The charter asks for a commitment to implement four industry actions:

- To have a named senior executive responsible and accountable for gender diversity and inclusion.
- To set internal targets for gender diversity in senior management.
- To publish yearly progress reports.
- Ensure the pay of senior

executives is linked to delivery against internal targets on gender diversity.

AAT head of policy and public affairs, Phil Hall, said: "AAT was the first, and for a long time the only, professional accountancy body to sign the Women in Finance Charter, because it knows closing the gap leads to a more diverse and creative workforce, broadens the skills base and can increase creativity and innovation – to say nothing of the obvious issue of fairness and the financial imperative for change."



LSBF moves into Vietnam

LSBF in Singapore has announced a new agreement with iBosses, Vietnam.

The collaboration will start with the launch of online ACCA programmes, and the long-term goal is for LSBF to offer both online and on-campus ACCA programmes to multiple countries in the region.

Rathakrishnan Govind, LSBF Global CEO, said: "Vietnam is a key destination for LSBF because of its large youth population and keen interest in quality education offered by overseas providers. We believe it is the right time to introduce LSBF's delivery models, which are suited to the fast-paced and challenging environment our students are experiencing."

As part of the agreement, LSBF Singapore will provide all the ACCA online content and study guides as well as international teaching resources, while iBosses Vietnam will provide the necessary resources and facilities for training projects and student management.



FRC widens inquiry

The FRC is extending its investigation into the preparation, approval and audit of the financial statements by KPMG of

Carillion plc, to include certain matters relating to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2013. The FRC is already investigating KPMG's audit for the years 2014, 2015 and 2016, and additional audit work carried out during 2017. Former Carillion group FDs Zafar Khan and Richard Adam are also under investigation.

PwC worried by tax avoidance

PwC considered resigning as auditor and

adviser to Ineos, the petrochemical empire, when its top three executives revealed they wanted to move much of their wealth overseas. The move could potentially deprive the UK Treasury of £400m-£4bn as Sir Jim Ratcliffe and chums moved to Monaco. It is believed that PwC's management sought advice from its public interest body, chaired by Lord Gus O'Donnell, as to whether it should refuse to help or even resign as Ineos' auditors. It is still auditor, so the advice must have been there was no reason to resign!

Cyber attack risks for 5G

Vulnerability to cyber attack is the biggest risk to businesses adopting 5G in the UK, according to new EY research. Some 40% of

respondents are worried about cyber attacks, and a similar percentage was cautious over the security of Internet of Things connectivity.

Ethnicity pay gap rising

Deloitte has 'voluntarily' reported its ethnicity pay gap for the second year running. The median hourly pay gap for Deloitte UK's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees stands at 7.9%, up on the 6.9% in 2017. The mean ethnicity pay gap was 12.9%. The Big 4 firm said the gap is due to the lower proportion of BAME employees holding the most senior positions in the firm, an issue it is working hard to address. While BAME people made up 22% of its overall workforce in April 2018, only 5% of partners and 10% of directors are BAME.

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MIKE DAY



Digital accounting skills are not optional

Digital accounting skills are all about understanding the digital technologies that are enabling accountancy today. Let's start with accounting software. Can you imagine a world where you could only use the apps on your phone if you were connected to your company's wi-fi, but nowhere else? The Cloud means working anytime, anywhere, anywhere. Add to that the growing – and very impressive – integrations with banking, the ability to take a picture of a receipt and interpret it, and the functionality to bring in a huge invoice and do the same – then you have the basis for AI to take hold of that data. The brain grows and grows, getting better and better at providing information.

This enables immediate knowledge and decision making. Making best use of that is a skill in itself.

There is a growing number of business apps that surround accounting software. There are hundreds of them, covering vertical sectors like retail, construction, catering, etc. We are also seeing that our accounting partners are becoming experts in these businesses, because that's what the apps are for – to provide effectiveness and efficiency. So they are good at understanding the needs of that retailer, architect, chef – the list goes on.

And guess what? The accountant is best placed to understand the business and to implement a suite of technology that really helps that client. In recent a survey, 83% of our partners said that understanding the technology was as important as understanding the accounting.

Mike Day, Director, UK Education Sector, Xero

New challengers for audit work

Tech firms look set to challenge the traditional accountancy firms' dominance of the audit market, says new analysis from Source Global Research.

It is predicting that many FTSE 100 companies are looking to break down their audit into different component parts, and the tech firms are favourites to get a piece of the action when this happens.

Source found a third of executives are already splitting their audit work to some extent, while 44% said they are weighing up such options 'right now'. The worry for accountancy firms is that nearly



two-thirds of executives think tech firms would do a better job of

automating their financial processes. They also think they will be able to gather data faster, and at a lower cost, than external accounting firms.

Source's Fiona Czerniawska said: "When clients decide to split a professional service it paves the way for change in the competitive landscape, and that's what is happening in audit at the moment."

So who could be the competition in the future? The Accentures and IBMs of this world are in one group, and even Amazon and Google have been put in the frame.

One of the Big 4 firms seems to be doing better than the others in this area. Just over half (52%) of those surveyed felt Deloitte was the best positioned to deliver when it comes to technology. That's way ahead of KPMG (22%) and EY (18%).

'Temporary' tax fix

The government's digital services tax (DST) on digital companies should be a temporary measure and ideally last for no more than five years, says the Chartered Institute of Taxation (CIOT).

The institute wants the DST repealed as soon as there is a multilateral agreement through the OECD on a global method to tax such companies on the value

created by users.

The CIOT's Glyn Fullelove said given the nature of the tax a pragmatic approach is required in order for it to be implemented effectively. "This is because revenue taxes such as this are a blunt instrument that cannot accurately represent the tax on the profits related to user based value on all businesses on which it is

imposed," he explained. That means inevitably some companies will be over-taxed and others under-taxed.

Fullelove said many companies will not have the necessary information to arrive at a precise answer to how much DST they should pay. So, in practice, the government will have to rely on companies to arrive at a 'best estimate' of the amount of the DST payable based on a just and reasonable estimate of the UK revenues liable to DST.

KPMG closes small business service

KPMG Enterprise is to close its small business accounting service, five years after it promised its cloud-based platform would "disrupt and dominate the SME market".

The Big 4 firm invested £40m into the technology platform, which it pledged would deliver accounting services to small and micro-

businesses at affordable prices.

It appears the firm has now written to all its current customers to tell them they need to find 'alternative arrangements'.

A KPMG spokesman said: "We can confirm that we are proposing to withdraw the provision of our small business accounting service in the UK, which offers cloud-

based bookkeeping to small and micro-businesses."

KPMG obviously doesn't see this as a growth area, and is re-focusing the business on services that are core to the firm.

A small number of staff (there were 200 working on this) will be used to manage the handover to alternative suppliers.

In brief

Digital news and VAT
Digital news products should be VAT-free, and treated in the same way as paper products, says a government commission. Newspapers are currently VAT-exempt because of their importance in promoting literacy and democratic accountability. The Cairncross Review has argued that extending



zero-rating to digital publications will help support journalism.

Online sales on the rise
A total of 246 online-only retail businesses went bust (insolvent) in 2018. That's a rise of 19% on 2017 and double the 120 that failed in 2010, according to figures compiled by Price Bailey. Partner Matt Howard said: "Declining consumer demand, coupled with aggressive discounting are driving

a growing number of online fashion retailers to the wall. The perennial problem is customers returning a high percentage of stock, often 40% to 50%."

AI funding rocketing
Investment into the UK's artificial intelligence sector by venture capital firms reached a record \$1.3bn last year. That's almost as much as the rest of Europe put together, says Dealroom. The new figures also represent a fourfold increase in just

five years. In comparison, Germany AI start-ups raised \$300m and French ones \$400m. The news came as the UK government unveiled a national industry-funded AI postgraduate courses.

And the wallet was empty...
When Canada's largest cryptocurrency exchange owner, Gerald Cotton, died the password access to his 115,000 accounts died with him. With the help of EY, however, the wallets have been opened and guess what – yes, they were empty!

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Bev Roberts shares her top health and study tips for exam success

Exercise

"Mens sana in corpore sano" is a Latin phrase, usually translated as "a healthy mind in a healthy body" and has been around since Roman times, but how does this relate to exercise?

Exercise helps to oxygenate your brain and helps to release tension. It has a calming effect, helping with mental relaxation, and this in turn will help you to study more efficiently.

Don't cram

It's widely accepted that you cannot revise effectively for prolonged periods of time. Some suggest a 50-minute revision session with a 10-minute break, whereas some have suggested a 20-minute session with a 5-minute break.

Every person is individual, and as such, each person retains information differently; ultimately, taking regular breaks is the key.

This will ensure that you stay productive and ensure you have the best chance of retaining what you have just worked on.

A short walk around the block can be sufficient to help you clear your head,

enabling you to return refreshed to your studies.

Set a routine

"All work and no play..." is a well-known proverb, and one that is often undervalued! A well-balanced routine of work and play is so important during revision.

You might find it difficult to maintain a regular exercise schedule, but doing so will almost certainly reap its rewards. Ideally, try to get active at least every other day of the week.

Learn what works best for you

Planning a routine will help to ensure you exercise during periods when you know you won't be studying. Some people prefer to study (or have the time) in the morning, whereas some are night owls. If you can plan some exercise around your study schedule, then you won't miss

A healthy mind and body will help you get



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Joanne McCourt,
Commercial Insight
Manager, New Look

Think Ahead

nd body a pass

out on valuable revision (or exercise) time.

Get walking!

I know you've probably heard it a million times, but walking really is very beneficial. Not only for your health, but it can also help you to relax, focus your thoughts, and leave you feeling refreshed and energised.

Eating

In order to perform at your best, you need to consider how you are fuelling your body. Eat well-balanced meals, with slow release carbohydrates are a good option.

Some examples are oats (porridge), fresh fruits, nuts, eggs, non-starchy vegetables, sweet potatoes, etc.

Try to avoid skipping meals; apart from the obvious health implications, skipping meals can be counter-productive toward your learning, affecting concentration and retention levels.

Drink plenty of fluids to make sure you keep hydrated. The occasional diluted fruit juice or cordial is fine, but your best option is nothing more complicated than plain water.

Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables. Instead of crisps, chocolates or fizzy drinks, try to stick to fresh fruit and vegetables as a healthy snack. Pineapple chunks and carrot sticks are a good, easy option.

Watch your caffeine intake – caffeine is a powerful stimulant, and although it has been known to help with concentration in small doses (one to two cups of regular strength coffee or tea), having too much

caffeine can be detrimental. Not only will it dehydrate you, but in higher doses it has been known to cause palpitations and is likely to disturb your sleep. People with heart conditions, diabetes, epilepsy, high blood pressure (to name just a few) should also be particularly careful when ingesting caffeine products.

Try to avoid so-called 'energy' drinks. Additional to the above, drinks that are loaded with sugar and/or caffeine might appear to give you a quick energy 'hit', but this feeling rarely lasts for long. Generally speaking, these are a poor substitute for healthy, well balanced food and fluid.

Watch your alcohol intake

Alcohol is a depressant, so drinking it is likely to make you feel more relaxed. But as alcohol is also a diuretic, it will also dehydrate you, disturb your sleep and would likely have a negative effect on your concentration levels the next day. We're not saying never have an alcoholic drink, but just be mindful of when you have it!

Time management is key

Exercising, socialising with friends and family, as well as making time to study are all equally as important as each other. You need to find a healthy balance, particularly when your exams are just around the corner.

Understand your learning outcomes

Do you know what you need to achieve for each topic or assessment that you're undertaking? For example, most bodies have a full breakdown of each course and its corresponding syllabus, which can usually be found on their website.

Continue to reflect

It's important to reflect on what you learn; whether it be a new topic in your course book, an article you've read in the press or even your own revision notes. Reflecting can often help to cement those points, ensuring they stay with you.

If there are any topics that you feel are

weak, try rewriting them in note form so that you understand them better. Tab your books, highlight specific areas, etc.

On the big day, remember the four 'P's – preparation prevents poor performance!

- Ensure you have allotted a sufficient amount of uninterrupted time to complete your exam.
- Turn off your TV and phone.
- Fully prepare yourself before accessing the exam link. Make sure your work-space is clear of any clutter, have a glass of water to hand, etc.
- Read the exam instructions fully prior to clicking 'Start'.
- Take a deep breath and don't panic. If you're sitting your exam, you know you're fully prepared.

- Read every question carefully and thoroughly.
- Be sure to check your figure work at least twice.
- If you get stuck on a question, move on. You may have time at the end to revisit any questions you have skipped – this is better than not finishing the paper.
- Stay calm!



You're an independent learner

Regardless of where you are studying, it is important to know that you are not on your own; you will likely have a whole raft of different support networks at your disposal. That being said, it is worth praising the independent learner!

You are proactive, reflective and self-aware. You will try to find solutions to problems, think about (and often question) what you experience, hear, see or learn, and you are more likely to know (or be aware of) your strengths and weaknesses. You're also not afraid to ask for help if it's needed. **PG**

• **Bev Roberts is exams officer for Training Link. She is also the award-winning tutor for the Diploma in Payroll Management and the L3 Self-Assessment Tax Returns course**

ICAEW spotlight **PG**

New benefit for ICAEW PQs

Learning cloud accounting software provider Xero is partnering with ICAEW to offer all ACA, ICAEW CFAB and USS students the chance to complete the Xero Advisor Certification Equivalency Course – for free! It's a great opportunity for students to gain highly prized accounting and tech skills.

What's involved?

There are 12 short modules covering all the essentials of cloud accounting. The e-learning course takes about six hours in total, so you can complete it in your spare time and stop and start as you progress through the course. Once you

have completed the course you'll get a certificate from Xero to show you are Xero Certified. You learn through real-life scenarios, client tasks and simulations and there are knowledge checks to help reinforce your learning. You need to register for the course (see below) and complete it within three months.

What will you learn?

The completion of this Xero certificate will show you how to set up and run Xero on a day-to-day basis, understand the differences and benefits of cloud accounting versus traditional methods, review month-end and generate the relevant

reports and learn about bills, purchase orders, quotes, invoices and much more! If you fancy learning more after you have completed the Xero certificate there is an extra six hours of free content to help progress your knowledge further.

Why gain the Xero Certification?

The Xero Certification shows that you have knowledge of the UK's leading cloud accounting software. This can benefit your career as there are thousands of businesses and practices in the UK and around the world that use Xero's software, so demand for these skills have never been higher!

To get started head to icaew.com/student benefits and click on 'Xero cloud accounting programme'. **PG**

• **Thanks to ICAEW for this article**

MTD explained

A radical change to the tax system is imminent. Here Xero explains all

Making Tax Digital (MTD) is an HMRC initiative designed to make sure the UK tax system is effective, efficient and easier for taxpayers.

MTD for business (MTDfb) begins on 1 April 2019 with MTD for VAT. From that date, VAT-registered businesses above the threshold of £85,000 will have to keep digital records and submit VAT returns using compatible software. Other components of MTD, such as income tax and corporation tax, have been placed on hold until April 2020 at the earliest.

When does it all happen?

There was a public beta programme in October 2018, leading to MTD for VAT going live in April 2019.

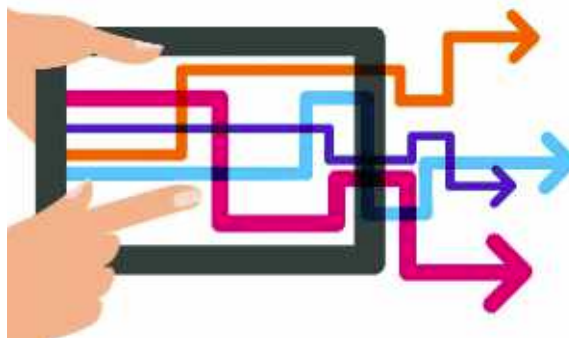
What is Xero's role in MTD?

Preparing for digital tax starts with managing business accounts online – it makes the transition smoother and business more efficient. Having consulted with HMRC on MTD, Xero is committed to supporting small businesses and their advisers through the transition.

How does Xero help?

As an HMRC-recognised VAT software provider, Xero can easily publish VAT returns, submit directly to HMRC and pay VAT online. We have also taken the opportunity to make additional improvements to our VAT module including tracking and managing VAT.

But with more than a million businesses



affected by the new scheme, and with spreadsheets still being prolific, many accountants are struggling to convert clients to MTD-compatible software in time. So we will make bridging software available soon, too, so clients will still be able to use a spreadsheet to calculate VAT and keep digital records. Our bridging software will allow them to upload VAT

figures directly from the spreadsheet into Xero where you can submit clients' MTD VAT returns securely and in real-time to HMRC. But then, when there is a little more time, it's time to move off that spreadsheet!

What additional help is there?

It's important to get your internal team, and in particular your fee earners, up to speed on the implications of the new mandate. And everyone needs to be kept up-to-date with the latest news. Some useful resources include HMRC and ICAEW, but don't forget to look out for updates on the Xero MTD resource centre.

As you gear up your team think about setting up an MTD 'taskforce' in your firm. This group can identify who's responsible for onboarding, training and providing ongoing support to clients. Depending on the size of your firm, consider formal project management and have a sponsor or decision maker, plus a project manager.

If you are a Xero Partner, as part of your preparation for MTD, join us on our MTD learning journey. We offer a suite of education that lets you upskill and prepare for future compliance. Once you've completed the learning journey you'll be recognised as an MTD-ready firm in Xero's adviser directory. Here's how: <https://www.xero.com/uk/partner-programs/partners/get-mtd-ready/>

• **Thanks to Xero for this article**

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TALENT

Think Ahead

Taking stock – by air

PwC has completed its first stock count audit using drone technology. Here's how

In a global first for the firm, PwC UK has undertaken a stock count audit using a drone.

This is all part of PwC's wider drive to harness emerging technologies to enhance audit quality and efficiency and transform the audit process.

The drone, which was manufactured and operated by QuestUAV, was used to capture over 300 images of the coal reserves at one the UK's last remaining coal-fired power stations, Aberthaw in South Wales.

The images from the drone were used to create a 'digital twin' of the coal pile in order to measure its volume. The value of the coal was then calculated to within 99% accuracy based on that volume measurement.

PwC audit partner Richard French said: "Coal stock has a material value on RWE's balance sheet, so we carry out an annual stock observation and evaluation as part of our audit process. We observe the manual coal count carried out by RWE's external surveyor, then assess the resulting data, which feeds into the financial statements. The traditional stock method involves climbing over the coal pile and using a two-metre GPS tracking pole to measure the area and elevation from the ground at various points. The data is then used to build a contour of the reserves and estimate its volume."

French explained that while the traditional method remains reliable and will still be used for RWE's formal year-end financial statements, the drone trial was conducted to explore ways of challenging the traditional method of stock counting. "It was a classic example of new technology challenging the old – and based on our results, the potential is groundbreaking," he pointed out.

The main objective of the drone flight was to assess the accuracy, efficiency



and logistical benefits of using drones when compared with traditional surveying methods. Initial findings from the project concluded that:

- The traditional method of manually traversing the coal pile can take around four hours, whereas using a drone it can be done in half-an-hour – a reduction of 85%.
- The drone captured some 900 data points per cubic metre, obtaining impressive overall accuracy levels of 2cm. This compares with the 1,200 readings taken across the whole site using the traditional method. That means the drone enhances accuracy by providing a true, continuous representation of the coal pile.
- The preparation for the drone flight requires access to only a limited area of the coal pile and therefore poses less of a health and a safety risk, particularly when parts of the coal pile are unstable.
- The flight does not interrupt normal operations on the coal pile, for example movement of machinery, and so is a less disruptive method.

The team viewed the drone data via PwC's Geospatial app, a visualization tool that helps the audit team interrogate data about the inventory on site. It found the operational benefits of using the drone included:

- More efficient monitoring and management of the Aberthaw site, which covers a total area of 200 hectares (for example how to best store the coal to free up the most space).
- Improved knowledge on the landscape around the site using aerial images, for example for vegetation management.
- Providing valuable insights on the health and maintenance of the wider power station assets.

While on site the multi-rotor drone was used to take photos of the wider site, allowing RWE to inspect the condition of assets that are high up and otherwise difficult to access. This, says PwC, is just one other use to demonstrate the benefits drones can have for businesses.

PwC's UK drone leader, Elaine Whyte, added: "Sectors with large assets in hard to reach areas are the most obvious starting points for expanding this kind of work further – from mining to agriculture and forestry."

She pointed out that a recent PwC report showed that drones have the potential to not only improve UK productivity, but to offer significant net cost savings for businesses to the tune of £16bn by 2030. **PQ**

- Check out PwC's report, entitled 'Skies the limit: the impact of drone on the UK economy'.

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LAUGHTER & TEARS

We blow a raspberry at the Oscars and blow the Brits out of the water! Yes, it's the PQ awards 2019...

The Café de Paris was filled with laughter – and a few tears – as the winners of the PQ magazine Awards 2019 were unveiled to the sound of Freddie Mercury and Queen. The coveted PQ magazine trophies have now wound their way home and are adorning mantelpieces around the world (Canada, at least).

The queue to get into the Café de Paris started early this year, but it wasn't long before the crowd discovered who had walked off with the top prizes. Our new PQ of the Year is Rebecca Dixon, an AAT trainee with the East Lancashire Hospital NHS Trust. Apprentice Zane Salmon was also on hand to pick up his award. He is on the Leadership Through Business programme with Grant Thornton and studies at Kaplan Financial. NQ of the Year went to CIPFA's Sophie Medwell, who had to follow the awards on twitter, as she's on secondment in Canada.

PQ editor Graham Hambly chooses the Accountancy Body of the Year, and that went to the AAT this time around. CIMA's Human Intelligence series, which has over 2.25m watches, won the Best Use of Social Media award.

Among the editor's other special awards winners were the UK (Only) ACCA Distance Learning (Independent Study Group) Facebook Group, and Avado for its work with Xero. A very special award was also presented on the night to Polly Thrassivoulou, after a few tears on both sides.

The top lecturer spots went to MMU's Yasar Zahid and Brigita Petrova, of LSBF, while the college awards went to All Inclusive Advice and Training, the University of Liverpool and Training Link.

Comedian Tom Ward brought the house down as he hunted the room for the best dressed accountants (see page 30 for the pics). Luckily for all of us the top three were more than ready to give the packed house a twirl!

THE INDEPENDENT JUDGING PANEL

Rachel Kellet, AAT's Head of Product Development
Sharon Machado, Head of Qualification development & Content, ACCA

Shaun Robertson, ICAEW Director of Qualifications
Polly Thrassivoulou, ICB's Head of Learning & Community Engagement

Paul Turner, Regional Vice President, UK & Ireland at the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants



And so the 2019 awards are about to begin...



All smiles at the world-famous awards venue, London's Café de Paris



Rebecca Dixon, our PQ of the Year, celebrates with friends



Comedian Tom Ward knocks 'em dead!



STUDENT BODY OF THE YEAR
NCSS



ACCOUNTANCY BODY OF THE YEAR
AAT



ACCOUNTANCY COLLEGE OF THE YEAR
PUBLIC SECTOR University of Liverpool



ACCOUNTANCY COLLEGE OF THE YEAR
PRIVATE SECTOR All Inclusive Advice and Training



ONLINE COLLEGE OF THE YEAR
Training Link



LECTURER OF THE YEAR PUBLIC SECTOR
Yasar Zahid, Manchester Met University



APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR
Zane Salmon



STUDY RESOURCE OF THE YEAR
Mindful Education



INNOVATION IN ACCOUNTANCY
London South Bank University



BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
CIMA & AICPA



TRAINING MANAGER/MENTOR OF THE YEAR
Brunilda Aliaj and Daniel Amoakah,
Training Place of Excellence



ACCOUNTANCY TEAM OF THE YEAR
Listers Group Ltd



ACCOUNTANCY PERSONALITY
Mary Ofili



EDITOR'S AWARD #1 UK ACCA Distance
Learning Students Facebook Group



EDITOR'S AWARD #2
Avado – working with Xero



EDITOR'S AWARD #3
Polly Thrasivoulou



LECTURER OF THE YEAR PRIVATE SECTOR
Brigita Petrova, LSBF



PQ OF THE YEAR
Rebecca Dixon

Value judgements

To touch or not to touch?
That is the question that's
been troubling Richard Poole.
Here he explains why

Having spent most of my career working in the service sector I often ponder over the question as to whether a tangible item (e.g. a product) has more perceived value than an intangible item (e.g. a service).

When teaching financial accounting papers, or when talking to my clients about their financial accounts, I am often asked to explain the difference between tangible and intangible assets.

The Conceptual Framework defines an asset, and explains when a business should recognise the asset in the financial statements.

The definition:

- 1) Assets must give rise to future economic benefits for the entity.
- The recognition criteria:
- 2) It is probable that any future economic benefits associated with the asset will flow to the entity.
- 3) The asset has a value that can be measured reliably.

In the context of a business, if we think about this in relation to a tangible asset (e.g. a delivery lorry):

- 1) Future Economic Benefit? ✓
- 2) Probable Future Economic Benefit? ✓
- 3) Measured reliably? ✓

In the context of a business, if we think about this in relation to an intangible asset (e.g. A brand or knowledge):

- 1) Future Economic Benefit? X
- 2) Probable Future Economic Benefit? X
- 3) Measured reliably? X

In terms of my own career, I regularly ask the question 'what adds value?'

- 1) How valuable is a tutor's knowledge to a student?
- 2) How valuable is a tax return to a client?

Taking each question in turn...

- 1) How valuable is a tutor's knowledge to



a student?

Students contact me every day and expect me to give my notes, mock exams and tips away to them for free. Why would they expect me to oblige?

I have always been happy to support and advise any student at little/minimal cost, but it is important that the longer-term investment into my product is valued.

My student exam pass rates percentages have on average always been in the 80s and 90s and this is because I have experience (both as a tutor and as a marker) of question approach, exam technique, key questions, relevant articles and top tips for all areas that I teach.

Do students generally appreciate the intangible value that a tutor brings to the classroom?

– From my businesses point of view, the question is: can I recognise my

knowledge and experience in the classroom on my business's balance sheet?

Based on the Conceptual framework above, clearly the answer is no.

- 2) How valuable is a tax return to a client?

As with my tutoring, I have always prided myself (when servicing my clients) on:

- 1) Charging a very fair price.
- 2) Offering a value for money service.
- 3) Going the extra mile.

I sent out an invoice on 1 February (following the recent 31 January tax return submission deadline) and one client (who had received some tax planning advice and received a tax refund as a result) emailed two questions to me:

- 'How is your fee calculated?'; and
- 'Why is your fee slightly up on last year?'

It was the client's perception of value that fascinated me once again.

My years of intangible experience to enable me to advise the client properly had taken second place to the tangible pound's value in the client's mind!

Again, from my businesses point of view, the question is, can I recognise my knowledge and experience in tax on my business's balance sheet?

Based on the Conceptual framework above, clearly the answer again is no.

If you had a business and you were thinking about recognising your tangible or intangible assets:

- 1) Would you like the value of knowledge/expertise to be recognised as an asset?
- 2) Would you put a higher value on tangible items compared to intangible items?

Therefore, does a business offering an excellent service have to work harder than a business offering an excellent product to achieve the same perceived value with customers? **PQ**

• **Richard Poole is a freelance classroom lecturer and online tutor with FME Online**



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The partnership between a social mobility charity and a firm of chartered accountants is giving bright young people from disadvantaged backgrounds access to accountancy careers – and positively affecting the culture of the business, too.

BKL, a firm of chartered accountants and tax advisers based in London and Cambridge, has been working with Leadership Through Sport & Business (LTSB) since its inception in 2012.

LTSB prepares and supports young people at risk of under-employment into meaningful roles with major firms, and have supplied apprentices to EY, RSM and Mazars among others. BKL, one of the longest-standing and most successful employers on the programme, has taken on 14 staff through LTSB so far, and passionately champions the impact of the programme.

“Like LTSB, BKL is committed to helping bright, dedicated people from diverse backgrounds to develop in meaningful roles,” says Meta Versluys, HR Manager at BKL. But critically, there’s a business case, too: “We all value the contributions that LTSB apprentices make at BKL and how well they respond to our support. As they bring more diversity into our workplace, they enhance the management capabilities of our existing people and are making a difference to the quality of our

Working together

A scheme aimed at promoting access to the profession for young people from diverse background boasts a proud track record



team and our service to clients. We benefit and our clients benefit.”

At the heart of their approach is a commitment to the apprentices, as Versluys explains. “We don’t just provide 18-month apprenticeships. Right from the outset we offer long-term employment and a real career.”

Their retention reflects that commitment, with ten of their current

staff of 190 drawn from LTSB – including one from 2013. Tom Li, now 23, is clear on the value of the programme.

“LTSB is brilliant. The best thing I chose to do, and I haven’t looked back. They found me a great work placement at BKL and I’m still working there five years on! I know they would still always be there for support if I needed them.”

The CEO of LTSB, Caroline Adair, says that this sort of long-term relationship is a gold standard for CSR-minded recruitment strategies. “BKL is a great case study of how recruiting diverse talent benefits firms, as well as the young people who get a vital first chance to show what they can do.

“We’re always looking for more firms to follow BKL’s lead and make a genuine commitment to social mobility by hiring these bright young people who have so much to offer!”

LTSB operates in Birmingham, London, Liverpool and Manchester. If your firm is interested in hiring for entry level positions in finance, then please contact Employment Director debs.barlow@leadershipthroughsport.org, or visit www.leadershipthroughsport.org for more info. **PQ**

Making waves:
LTSB apprentices
with Meta Versluys
(centre) and Tom
Li (second from
right)

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GUIDANCE FOR ACA STUDENTS

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Making a statement

In the second of his two-part article, Tom Clendon looks at how the revised framework measures assets and liabilities, and considers the role of the statement of other comprehensive income. This stuff you need to know

In last month's article we saw that the IASB's conceptual framework for financial reporting provides a set of principles on which International Financial Reporting Standards are based. The article explained that the framework had been revised and resulted in a new definition of the key elements of assets and liabilities and changed their recognition criteria.

In addition, the revised framework also saw it extended. It lays down new guidance as to how assets and liabilities should be measured and suggests when they should be measured at historical cost or be revalued. The revised framework broke new territory in exploring the principles as to when gains and losses should be included in the statement of profit or loss and when in other comprehensive income.

Measurement

The previous framework did not include much guidance on how to measure assets and liabilities. In developing the revised framework the IASB even considered whether just a single measurement basis should be mandated. In other words, whether all assets and all liabilities should be either at cost or re-measured to value.

The conclusion was that different measurement bases could provide useful information to users in different circumstances. Thus the framework promotes the mixed measurement approach. Two categories of measurement basis were identified. Historical cost and current value. But when to use cost and when to use value? Consistent with the rest of the framework, guidance is based on considering what is the most relevant and faithful representation basis to use in any one given situation.

Let me make up an example to illustrate. It's acknowledged that the use of current value always seems relevant, because it is forward-looking in predicting what the asset might be sold for. However, if an item of property plant and equipment is never going to be sold but will be written off over its useful life, it can be strongly argued that it is not relevant to use current value and the most faithful



representation is to measure the asset at cost less depreciation.

The role of other comprehensive income

For the first time, the revised framework attempts to give guidance for the IASB to take into account when creating future standards that have to adjudicate on the classification of income and expenses between the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

In principle, the revised framework has, as a default, that all income and expenses be included in the statement of profit or loss. However, it does acknowledge that there are exceptional circumstances where gains and losses should be included in other comprehensive income! It will be interesting to see in the long run whether this "clarification" actually results in changes to existing standards.

What can we expect in an exam?

While ACCA aims to test practical application of the framework and the accounting standards, it is important that students can explain the theory behind the revised framework and its implications on any financial statements under review.

Conclusion

The objective of the IASB in revising its framework is to have an up-to-date and comprehensive framework; to assist in producing coherent and consistent accounting standards, that in turn will achieve the goal of improving the quality and clarity of financial reporting. Laudable aims; but only time will tell whether the IASB achieves this goal! **PQ**

• Tom Clendon is the AVADO ACCA lecturer for SBR and FR

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Stephen Flatman explains the changes to the CIMA exams and outlines how they will affect you

Driven by the findings of our extensive and rigorous research programme into the future of finance, we launched our updated professional qualification on 31 January 2019. Over the course of 18 months, we consulted with more than 5,500 finance professionals from over 2,000 public and private organisations in over 150 countries through face-to-face interviews, roundtables and a global survey. Through this research, we brought together views from different types of organisations and businesses to get a solid understanding of what the world of finance needs now and in the future.

From our discussions with these organisations and finance professionals it has become clear that finance professionals need to embrace technology and go beyond their conventional roles to drive impact, deliver solutions and create value.

To reflect this, we have updated our professional qualification to help current members, students and future finance professionals do this right and successfully navigate the disruption brought by emerging technologies and digital transformation. We are committed to equipping you with the skills employers are demanding and the confidence to say, "I can do that".

So what will you learn?

The professional qualification brings together management accounting, financial accounting and business skills, giving all our students the practical skills employers need. Once qualified, you will be able to work in a range of roles in both the private and public sectors, from finance and IT to business consultancy and senior management positions.

The updates to the professional qualification cover all the competencies and skills employers expect in a digital business world, including current and future hot topics such as digital costing and digital strategy, blockchain, artificial intelligence and data analytics. This will put you in a prime position to help your organisation take advantage of all the opportunities the digital-era will bring and efficiently manage new risks such as cybercrime.

The route to becoming a CIMA member is still the same. And if you are not currently studying with us but want to, you could be eligible for exemptions if you are:

- A graduate with a qualification listed in our database of accredited programmes.
- A graduate of a degree programme that is related to our syllabus.
- An Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) student or member.
- Have an MBA or a master's degree in accounting.
- Studying or have completed a relevant qualification with another professional body.

So what's new exactly?

The CIMA professional qualification syllabus remains divided in three pillars – enterprise (E),

performance (P) and financial (F) – across three levels – operational, management and strategic. The syllabus includes a total of nine subjects, which each cover a specific area of knowledge and content; all subjects interlink with each other to give you an unmatched set of knowledge and skills. At each level, your skills and competencies will be assessed in a Case Study exam, a real life business scenario and role play where you will need to demonstrate your technical, business, people and leadership skills and competencies.

The changes we have made reflect the advances in the world of modern finance and business, and continue to meet the employability needs of both business and people. While we have kept the main structure, number, format and length of our exams, we have added new key areas such as technology, business models, integrated reporting, and cyber-security to our core accounting, finance, and business topics.

At the Operational Level, we made significant changes to E1 Managing Finance in a Digital World, and added content around technology, data and information in a digital world and the changing shape and structure of the finance function. When you finish E1, you will know what it is like to work in a digital world and have a good knowledge on how to tackle the main challenges this working environment brings.

Under P1 Management Accounting and F1 Financial Reporting we have updated the content to make it more digitally-focused in areas such as cost accounting, budgeting, and short-term commercial decision-making for P1, and areas such as managing cash and working capital section for F1.

At the Management Level, we added an additional knowledge area around business models and value creation for E2 Managing Performance, to reflect the impact of digitisation on business models. Under P2 Advanced Management Accounting, we updated key areas such as managing the costs of creating value, capital investment decision-making and managing performance of organisational units to ensure you acquire digital skills fit for the modern business world. We also added integrated reporting as a new area in F2 Advanced Financial Reporting.

CIMA giving digitally

At the Strategic Level, you will see that we have now included digital strategy as part of E3 Strategic Management, this will help you confidently develop a digital strategy and support the digital transformation of your business. In P3 Risk Management there is now a new area looking at cyber risks, giving you better insight and understanding to identify, evaluate and manage new digital risks on behalf of your organisation. We moved some of the

content from P3 Risk Management to F3 Financial Strategy; F3 now also includes business valuation covering everything you need to know about intangible and tangible assets.

Exam blueprints

In addition to the updates to the CIMA professional qualification syllabus, we have developed and launched exam blueprints – a first for the management accounting sector. Our newly introduced exam blueprints

make our expectations clear and articulate what you will be assessed on in our exams, ensuring that you acquire the skills you need for a successful career in business.

Our exam blueprints are designed to help you get the most out of your learning experience with CIMA and go on to build a successful career in business. To help you do this, we have also included for each blueprint a series of 'I Can' statements, which reflect the competencies you will own and tasks you will be able to perform as you pass each level, and correspond directly with what employers told us they are looking for in the modern business world.

The CGMA Competency Framework

We also made changes to our CGMA Competency Framework, first launched in 2015. We use it to clearly outline the skills and abilities that employers from a range of different industries and sectors told us are essential for their finance teams to have.

The updated CGMA Competency Framework, now adds and incorporates the new area of digital skills to the four core existing knowledge areas of technical, business, leadership and people skills.

The CGMA Competency Framework directly informs our CIMA professional qualification syllabus and with the new updates now ensures our current students and future members develop the digital skills they need to



yes qualification y focused boost

stay ahead and to lead the transformation of their departments, fortifying their organisations for the long-term.

A seamless transition

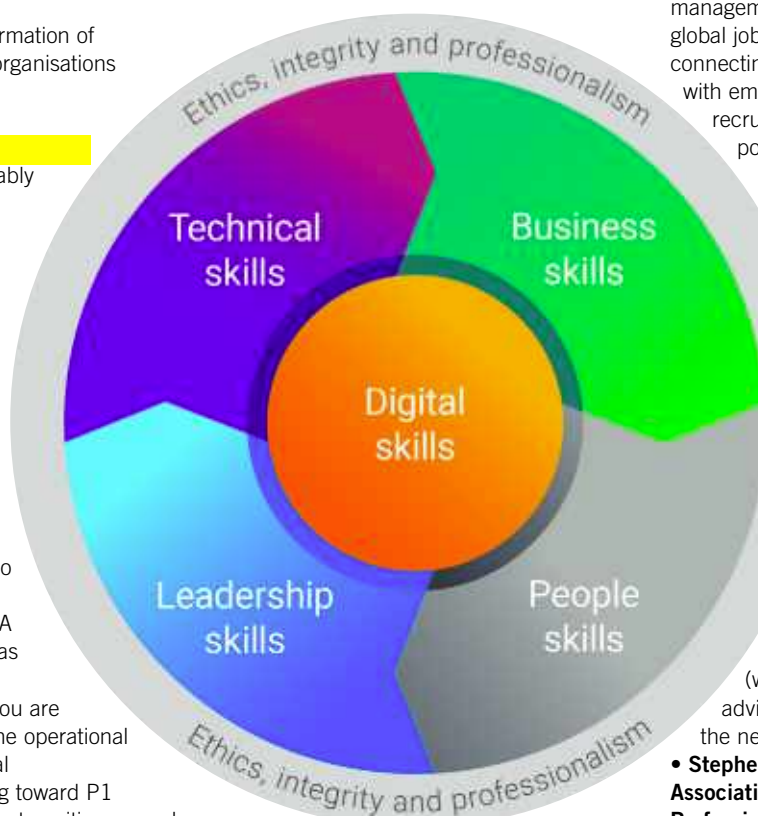
Many of you reading this are probably part way through your journey to earning the Chartered Global Management Accountant designation and may wonder how this impacts you and your study plans.

We have put a lot of thought into making sure all students are in a good position to move forward with their studies. We have consulted extensively with tuition providers and ensured there is a long lead time to help smooth the transition. We have also created a new tool to help you transition over to the updated CIMA professional qualification syllabus as seamlessly as possible.

So how does it work? Let's say you are part-way through your studies at the operational level, you passed E1 Organisational Management and are now studying toward P1 Management Accounting. Go to the transition tool and enter your Contact ID; based on the information we hold we will tell you which exams you can still take under the 2015 CIMA professional qualification syllabus, which ones you will need to take under the 2019 CIMA professional qualification syllabus, and what the deadlines are.

How will CIMA help me succeed?

On becoming CIMA qualified you will also



become a CGMA designation holder and officially become part of a worldwide community of like-minded and highly-skilled finance professionals. Your designations signify deep financial knowledge, broad strategic acumen and constantly evolving competencies; employers around the world have told us that they recognise the value you bring to organisations and seek to hire professionals like you.

With your ACMA and CGMA letters, you will

have a global passport to build your career in business and have access to a library of learning tools and leading-edge resources, including exclusive reports, research and learning to challenge your thinking and enhance your employability in a highly competitive job market. For example, this year we are providing the CGMA Digital Mindset pack free of charge to all members to ensure you remain employable with access to cutting edge content related to the future of finance.

We are actively supporting the recruitment of management accounting talent through our global job board CIMA MyJobs, directly connecting highly qualified candidates like you with employers and specialist finance recruitment agencies to put you in the best possible position when looking for your next role.

Do you want to know more?

- Read our 'Re-inventing finance for a digital world' white paper to find out everything you need to know about the future of the profession.
- Check out our Future of Finance hub at www.cimaglobal.com/future to find out more about the CIMA professional qualification, including a timeline detailing dates updates to the syllabus and newly introduced exam blueprints.
- If you are currently studying with us, have a look at our transition tool (www.cimaglobal.com/transition) to get advice and ensure a seamless transition to the new syllabus. **PQ**

• **Stephen Flatman is VP Examinations at the Association of International Certified Professional Accountants**



Timeline

- 31 January 2019: Launch of the updated CIMA professional Qualification and the updated CGMA Competency Framework
- 1 February 2019: Release of examination blueprints for Objective Tests and Case Study exams under the 2019 professional qualification.
- 31 March 2019: Student and member 2019 subscriptions due.
- 29 April 2019: 2020 exam timetable released.
- 1 May 2019: Detailed transition guides per subject released.
- May 2019: Exam and question tutorials released — the exam tutorial will allow you to gain familiarity with the technology used to deliver the exam. The question tutorial will allow you to gain familiarity with the types of questions encountered in the exam.
- 1 June 2019: Updated exam marking and results guidance released.
- 1 August 2019: Courses and learning products from tuition and learning partners will begin launching for the 2019 CIMA professional

qualification.

Updated Kaplan Study Texts available to purchase.

New CIMAstudy.com courses available to purchase.

- 3 November 2019: Last day of Objective Test exams under the 2015 professional qualification.
- 4 November 2019: First day of Objective Test exams under the updated 2019 professional qualification.
- 5-9 November 2019: Last Operational Case Study exam window under the 2015 professional qualification.
- 12-16 November 2019: Last Management/Gateway Case Study exam window under the 2015 professional qualification.
- 19-23 November 2019: Last Strategic Case Study exam window under the 2015 professional qualification.

- 1 February 2020: First Case Study exam window under the updated CIMA professional qualification. Resit available under the 2015 professional qualification for students who failed a November Case Study exam.

Smooth transition is the key to Brexit

ACCA still calling for clarity when it comes to the dreaded 'B' word!

Bar rules used to dictate 'no religion, no politics'. Today it feels that Brexit could easily, and perhaps should, be added to that list, easily justifying its own position rather than a political sub-topic. The divisive word – Brexit – and all its consequences and connotations have been knocking around for the past three years or so.

And while some of you PQs might automatically shut down when the 'B' word is persistently thrown around, it is important to keep abreast of the situation as the deadline fast approaches. Despite the fact the profession has been calling on government for more clarity throughout the process, with just weeks to go to the UK's departure from the EU on 29 March we are none the wiser about what will happen after that date.

But here is what we do know...

Throughout the Brexit negotiations, ACCA has been involved in high-level discussions both in Westminster and in Brussels over the protected movement of goods and services, recognition of UK regulatory frameworks and qualifications, and, most importantly, access to talent.

Business are preparing as best as they can with the information available. Whether this is through conversations with their supply chains, customers and lenders – discussing their ability to deal with unexpected changes in cash flow, supply or demand, and how they can best help each other. But, for the most part, there is a sense that many are simply crossing their fingers, hoping that whatever terms the UK leaves on that it will not adversely affect them and the way they do business.

It is hugely important that government maintains comprehensive conversations with business about potential and real impacts of Brexit; not just during Brexit negotiations but also on any new free trade agreements with non-EU countries.

The focus in recent months has been on logistics, the flow of goods across borders. ACCA members will serve as vital advisers here, supporting businesses with tax matters and dealing with customs and excise, for example. It is, however, also vitally important to consider what happens with UK services exports, which the Office for National Statistics revealed are worth £70bn.

This includes enabling aspects of the UK/EU trading relationship and other trading relationships to come, including data transfer, incentives for cross-border investment in



technology and software. So far, conversations have focused almost exclusively on goods, but we ignore the services sector at our peril.

Specifically on qualification, the UK currently adheres to and enjoys the benefits of the EU's Professional Qualification Directive; members who are EU nationals are currently able to obtain access to relevant regulated accountancy roles across the EU with the minimum of barriers.

With the UK poised to leave the EU single market, UK nationals may no longer be able to take advantage of this recognition system. We therefore support and urge continued collaboration between EU and UK regulators and professional bodies to allow the continued movement of professionals between the UK and EU countries, with the minimum of barriers.

However difficult discussions in Europe are proving to be, it is important that the UK government and indeed Brussels maintain a willingness to compromise, collaborate and continue to have open dialogue with business about potential Brexit impacts and opportunities. This will reduce the risk of negative and unintended consequences and their potential impact on jobs, the economy and, ultimately, society.

The current situation

Resolving the Brexit conundrum remains the biggest issue the country has faced in modern times. Politically, Britain is locked in an impasse, creating massive uncertainty for business.

Whatever happens up to and beyond 29 March, government must prioritise bridging the void that has developed between government and business, and indeed, wider society.

The economic picture amid such uncertainty is bleak, as highlighted in ACCA's latest Global Economics Conditions survey of more than 3,000 accountants worldwide. For the end of 2018, confidence in the UK economy fell sharply – by 15 points – and is now at a record low. Such findings are disturbing and demonstrate just how much the uncertainty surrounding Brexit is affecting business and investment activity and confidence.

Despite its long standing ability to deal with change and risk, the accountancy profession has not been immune from such uncertainty. With no withdrawal agreement in place, ACCA members are now faced with a momentous task of adequately preparing for potentially planning for massive change in the coming weeks, whilst the user manual is yet to be published.

We therefore continue to call on government to ensure businesses and the professions are given adequate time to adapt to any changes in regulatory frameworks to allow for as smooth a transition as possible.

While the next few weeks will no doubt be turbulent, ACCA will continue to work alongside other professions and business groups to proactively engage with government on behalf of our members and students. We will also continue to track business sentiment in relation to Brexit and its impact and conduct research to help us, our members and policy makers make informed choices.

We will continue to do all we can to ensure we are ready for whatever may come, so even if at 11pm on 29 March we're at a sharp cliff-edge we will ensure we have a parachute ready! **PQ**

• Thanks to ACCA for this article

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ICAEW	<input type="checkbox"/> CFAB	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced	
ICAS	<input type="checkbox"/> TC	<input type="checkbox"/> TPS	<input type="checkbox"/> TPE	
Tax	<input type="checkbox"/> ATT	<input type="checkbox"/> CTA		
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IFRS 16 in action

Tesco explains how the new leasing standard will change some figures, but will ultimately have no economic impact on the business

Tesco plc recently hosted a briefing for analysts and investors at its UK HQ about IFRS 16, the new financial reporting standard on accounting for leases.

Tesco wanted to explain the nature of the standard and the associated changes to the presentation of the Tesco financial statements and performance measures using its most recently reported 1H 2018/19 results.

It stressed that the new standard will have no economic impact on the group. It also wanted to emphasise the standard would have no effect on how the business is run, or on cash flows. It does, however, have a significant impact on the way the assets, liabilities and the income statement of the group are presented, as well as the classification of cash flows relating to lease contracts.

IFRS 16 is effective for all accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019. As such, Tesco's first reported accounting period under IFRS 16 will be the 2019/20 financial year, which runs from 24 February 2019 to 29 February 2020. As previously indicated, the group intends to adopt the standard fully retrospectively.

In summary, IFRS 16 seeks to align the presentation of leased assets more closely to owned assets. In doing so, a right of use asset and lease liability are brought on to the balance sheet, with the lease liability recognised at the present value of future lease payments. While the right of use asset is matched in value to the lease liability at inception, it differs in value through the life of the lease.

From an income statement perspective, the pre-IFRS 16 rental charge is replaced by depreciation and interest. IFRS 16 therefore results in a boost to operating profit, which is reported prior to interest being deducted. While depreciation reduces on a straight-line basis, interest is charged on outstanding lease liabilities and therefore for any given lease, interest is higher in the earlier years and



the income statement below operating profit is highly dependent on average lease maturity. For an immature portfolio, depreciation and interest are higher than the rent they replace and therefore IFRS 16 is dilutive to EPS. For a mature portfolio, they are lower and therefore IFRS 16 is accretive.

Tesco's 1H 2018/19 financial statements, restated for IFRS 16, will form the prior period comparative numbers for the first published IFRS 16 accounts in October 2019. The headline impacts of IFRS 16 on these statements can be summarised as follows:

- Group sales and total cash flow are completely unaffected.
- Group operating profit increases by £188m to £1,121m as rent is removed and only part-replaced by depreciation; group operating margin increases by 59 basis points to 3.53%.
- Profit before tax and Diluted EPS both decrease, by £(101)m and (0.91)p respectively, due to the combination of depreciation and interest being higher than the rent they replace. This is due to the relative immaturity of the group's lease portfolio, with leases being around one-third expired on average. The proportion of

EPS dilution will reduce as the portfolio matures and, most notably, as underlying earnings increase.

- Net assets are reduced by £(1.4)bn to £13.0bn, as a 'new' lease liability of £(10.6)bn and 'new' right of use asset of £7.8bn are recognised and onerous lease provisions and other working capital balances are derecognised.
- Total indebtedness increases by £(3.3)bn to £(15.8)bn due to lease extensions and contingent commitments being included and lease-specific discount rates being applied.

Tesco wanted to point out that the introduction of IFRS 16 has no bearing on the plans or its financial ambitions.

The supermarket giant said it will continue to provide sufficient disclosure to translate progress against the 2019/20 ambitions back to a pre-IFRS 16 basis.

Its 2018/19 preliminary results will continue to be reported on a pre-IFRS 16 basis, accompanied by a headline summary of the impact of the new standard. The full 2018/19 financial statements prepared on an IFRS 16 basis will be shared shortly after the preliminary results. **PQ**

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Is apprentice programme in trouble?

The government, and Department for Education in particular, have “some way to go” before they can demonstrate that the apprenticeships programme is achieving value for money, says the National Audit Office.

The NAO's main concern is the fact that the current number of apprenticeships is well below pre-reform levels. When we talk about pre-reform here we are talking ‘the levy’.

The number of apprenticeship starts in 2017/18 was 375,000, 26% lower than the 509,400 starts in 2015/16. As a result, the rate of take-up would need to double for the government to meet its target of three million new starts by March 2020, which the NAO says “it is very unlikely to achieve”.

There is also a concern about the focus on starts rather than completions. Some 32% of apprentices in 2016/17 failed to complete their apprenticeships successfully.

In its report, the NAO says the DoE is also hoping that higher-level apprenticeships will deliver more value in terms of long-term wage return to the apprentice. Training for these apprenticeships absorbs more public funding, so there is a risk that the value of apprenticeships to the economy is not proportionate to the amount of government funding.

Apprenticeships also now cover a wide range of professions and types of training – such as accountants, actuaries and solicitors – which, says the NAO, raises questions about whether public money is being used to pay for training that already existed in other forms. Is that a warning to the accountancy profession?

The NAO is also unhappy with the Education & Skills Funding Agency (EFSA), which is responsible for apprenticeship policy and for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults. It found that the EFSA has limited assurance that apprentices are spending at least 20% of their time on off-the-job-training, which is a key requirement of being on an apprenticeship.

The NAO report concludes with concerns about the long-term financial sustainability of the programme and is recommending government departments should determine what action they can take to deal with the risk of overspending should demand pick up in a way to meet the programme's objectives.



Life at **LSBF**

Brigita Petrova, 37, is an ACCA, AAT and CIMA tutor based in London. She has worked there for seven years. She has a degree in accounting, is ACCA qualified, and is currently studying Kung Fu! She was recently named PQ's Lecturer of the Year

What time does your alarm clock go off on a work day? It normally doesn't – I work long hours, but this does allow flexibility and I wake up naturally.
What's the first thing you do when you get to your desk? Make an espresso.

What's on your desk? A two-litre water bottle. And now my PQ award!

What's the best thing about where you work? Having great students. The tutor team is pretty awesome, too.

Where's your favourite place to go for lunch? Pret or similar, fresh and healthy.

What (or who) can you see when you sit at your desk? Regwana and Zahid – two of our most fabulous tutors. And the Nespresso coffee machine.

Which websites are your

favourites? The London Marathon website – I am running the marathon in April (my dream).

Which websites do you use for work? PQ magazine, ACCA, AAT.

How many hours a week do you spend in meetings? I

spend a lot of time in the classroom lecturing students. A different type of meeting, but the one that is essential to my job.

What time do you leave the office? I am a bit of a night owl so I like later starts and working later. If I'm working an evening then typically 9.30pm, if not 6pm.

How do you relax? Kung Fu, running and yoga are favourites, but anything active and especially if shared with friends.

What's your favourite tipple? Red wine, on the rare occasion I get to party.

How often do you take work home? Constantly, especially with student emails.

What is your favourite TV show? LSBF TV, of course!
Summer or winter? Summer.
Pub or club? Both.

Who is your hero? My father: super caring, smart and dearly loved by everyone. He taught me so much in my early years. I sadly lost him when I was 12.

If you had a time machine, where would you go? I'd love to see the dinosaurs, live in the Mayan and Incan towns, or go to ancient Egypt when the pyramids were built. But being a true management accountant I would most like to travel into the future, some 200 years or so from now!

If you hadn't chosen teaching, what else might you be? A Kung Fu instructor.

In brief

Smart casual Goldman Sack is relaxing its dress code to reflect the “more casual environment” of today's workplace. A memo from CEO David Solomon says the bank wants to move away from the everyday option of the suit and tie. The problem is Solomon didn't indicate what the new ‘acceptable’ apparel is! He said: “All of us know what is and is not appropriate.” The proviso is employees must still dress “in a manner that is consistent” with client's expectations. Solomon, who's DJ name is D-Sol, said he

trusted employees will exercise good judgement in this regard!

No Brexit deal expected Nigh on three-quarters (73%) of finance professionals believe that a no-deal Brexit is a ‘very’ or ‘quite’ likely outcome, according to a new survey from ICAS. Just over half (56%) of the same finance professionals said that their organisation is prepared for a no-deal Brexit. Only around one in three, however, believe that the UK will formally leave the European Union on the appointed date of 29 March.

Gradual progress The UK has made ‘gradual progress’ on the Women in Work Index, rising to 13th place this year, according to PwC. The Big 4 firm said that increasing the UK's female employment rate from 57% to Sweden's 69% could boost GDP by £178bn. Scotland, the South West and Wales rank as the top three regions based on five indicators of female empowerment. The bottom two places in the UK are occupied by the East and West Midlands, primarily due to high female unemployment rates.

The PQ Book Club: books you should read

Sleep by Lisa Varadi (Quadrille Publishing, £7.99)

We've all been there, getting into work groggy, grumpy and barely able to speak – and all because we've had a sleepless night. Well, help is at hand, in the form of this handy guide to getting a good night's kip that will delight insomniacs everywhere.

Sleep is of course, one of the most important things that we do, so why do so many of us skimp on it? The author describes sleep as “one of nature's greatest gifts”, and in

this book sets out to raise awareness of both the significance and splendour of sleep. Varadi describes the four stages of sleep (from shallow to deep) and the importance of the body clock; more accurately, the value of having a regular nighttime routine.

If you want to become an expert on the subject of sleep, then look no further than this book. It explains why sleep is so important for maintaining energy levels; for your physical health and well-being; how it helps you to stay healthy; and

can even improve your intellect, helping long-term memory. Particularly interesting is Varadi's section on dreams, and she also touches on the importance of diet for good sleep.

You can also discover whether you are an owl or a lark, and the differences between them, and there are exercises to help you get the perfect night's shut-eye. **PQ rating 4/5** You won't doze off



HMRC 'HOUNDED HOMELESS MAN'

HMRC's pursuit of a homeless man over a £1,600 fine has been described as 'ridiculous' and 'absurd' by the judge hearing the case. Lawyers for HMRC claimed that there was "nothing special" about Krzysztof Pokorowski's case and his homelessness was not an "out of the ordinary turn of events". The judge, Nicolas Aleksander, wondered how any HMRC officer, acting reasonably could have

reached this decision. Pokorowski, a self-employed electrician, became homeless in 2014, so missed a return filing deadline in April 2015. He slept rough until finding a homeless shelter in December 2016. By February 2017 HMRC fines had built up to £1,600. The judge noted that within three months of finding a permanent home the accused filed the tax return.



BEST DRESSED ACCOUNTANTS

As always, the Café de Paris was buzzing for PQ awards night – especially when compere Tom Ward decided to run a best-dressed accountant competition! He picked out his top three, with the runners-up wearing a black velvet jacket and pink jump suit respectively. And the winner? It was Gloria Murray, who was shortlisted for Personality of the Year. We will be running the same competition next year. But in the meantime, here are this year's lot...

WATCHDOG SHAMED BY BUILDER

The Financial Conduct Authority has re-filed its annual accounts after a builder, Clive May, said they were illegible. May highlighted handwritten changes to capital expenditure and edits to lease arrangements. He felt they looked 'hastily penned' and wasn't sure who had made the changes. May said: "If I'd have filed accounts like that as a small business owner, I would have been investigated."

NEW TAX ON CLOTHING?



Fashion retailers and manufacturers could be forced to pay a levy on each item sold in a government effort to reduce the 300,000 tonnes of clothing that finds its way each year to incineration plants or landfill sites. The plans also include the introduction of a deposit scheme for bottles and cans and free food waste and gardens rubbish collection for every home.

'PEOPLE OF MEANS'

Former Starbucks CEO, Howard Schultz, has complained about people calling him a billionaire. Rather than using such an expression he wants you to use 'people of means' or 'people of wealth'. The Guardian columnist, Arwa Mahdawi, warned that Schultz should be careful what he wants. After hearing his suggestion many people put forward their own alternatives, including 'robber barons', 'cash vampires' and much worse.



WHAT TAX AVOIDANCE?

Dutch historian Rutger Bregman recently hit the headlines when he claimed the super-rich had done a great job of rebranding tax avoidance as philanthropy. Speaking on a Davos panel he said that we need to "stop talking about philanthropy and start talking about taxes". He wanted to know why no one at Davos was talking about tax avoidance. "It feels like I am at a firefighters conference and no one's allowed to speak about water."



HELICOPTER MUM

Accountant Jane Bentall was not known as a 'helicopter parent' until she recently revealed she sometimes used the company helicopter to ensure she was home to help put the children to bed! Bentall is the MD of caravan site owner Haven, and the offer to use the slightly more direct mode of transport came when she moved from an office to more operational role. She explains: "They didn't buy it for me, just to be clear, but they were able to let me use it [the helicopter] to get home for my children's bath-time."

HUGE FINE FOR UBS

A French court has fined Swiss investment bank UBS a record €3.7bn for encouraging its wealthy customers to avoid their taxes. The Paris criminal court also ordered the bank to pay an additional €800k to the French government. The fine in effect wipes out UBS's €4.32bn (\$4.9bn) net profit for 2018.

WE'VE GOT THE LOT

Sticker yourself calm

We have been told that stickering is a creative activity that will help you relax and put your mind in a more positive place. It's apparently the fun alternative to colouring. With Esme Rotmans' book you have 14 stick-by-numbers pictures to help take your mind off accountancy exams...

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