Welcome to the latest edition of our focus on research newsletter. I hope that you all had a lovely summer. In the five months since our last Newsletter we have awarded funding to a wide range of new projects – from pension scheme accounting to credit unions. Our new research funding strategy will be launched in January 2009, but before then, we are keen to receive grant applications for research that is policy relevant and meets our current criteria. Please see our website www.icas.org.uk/research for further details or contact us to discuss your ideas. Some ideas for policy relevant research, which were generated from the special panel session ICAS held at the BAA conference, are included on page four of this Newsletter, and we would particularly welcome any ideas for projects in these areas.

Our recent publication by David Molyneaux - What do you do now? Ethical Issues encountered by Chartered Accountants - has generated a huge amount of interest and David has presented his work at a number of events. This report has appealed to accountants, both in practice and in business, and demonstrates the need to have research that has a practical benefit on working lives.

The new ICAS website was launched in July 2008 to provide a better service. Electronic copies of research reports from 2002 to date are now available to download free of charge from the website and we hope that these will be useful to both academics and students. We are continuing to work on our publications older than 2002 and, where feasible, will endeavour to also make these reports available electronically.

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ICAS is committed to widely distributing the findings of its research publications to members, policy makers and other interested parties. As part of this initiative a number of research events have been held to publicise and encourage debate on the findings and policy implications of ICAS research.

What do you do now? Ethical Issues Encountered by Chartered Accountants

David Molyneaux - University of Aberdeen

On 12th May 2008, an event was held at CA House, Edinburgh to launch David Molyneaux’s publication *What do you do now? – Ethical Issues encountered by Chartered Accountants*. Donald Main, Convener of the ICAS Ethics Committee, chaired the event which included a presentation by David Molyneaux and then a lively question and answer session with the audience and panel members. The panel members were Richard George, Chair of the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants and Anton Colella, Chief Executive of ICAS.

The report collates 28 true-life ethical dilemmas faced by chartered accountants, in practice or in business. The cases are intended to encourage debate and understanding rather than provide definitive answers. For further information on the report please see the new publications section of this newsletter or download the full report free of charge from www.icas.org.uk/research.

The discussions at the event stressed the need for individual members to live by ethical codes and not just pay them lip service. However, it was recognised that this is not always easy, especially for members in business who may not have a support network of colleagues with whom they can share their ethical dilemmas. The question of what professional bodies can do to support such members was raised and the issue of whistleblowing was debated. The difficult issues of tax and ethics were also discussed – where does the line between tax planning and tax avoidance fall and what is ethical behaviour in this regard. Members of the audience also noted that the ethical dilemmas raised in the cases were not always as clear as they appeared at first sight, highlighting the need for debate and training for accountants to be able to deal with dilemmas as they come across them in their working lives.

It is hoped that this report will be used to debate ethics both in business and in practice and with this objective in mind David Molyneaux will be undertaking further ethics sessions for CA firms.
Research events

Good Governance Practice in AIM Companies – Myth or Reality?

The publication of the report Corporate Governance in Alternative Investment Market (AIM) Companies by Chris Mallin and Kean Ow-Yong of the University of Birmingham was marked by a joint event with the Quoted Companies Alliance (QCA), held in the City of London in April, where Chris Mallin gave a presentation and a panel of speakers each contributed their views. The panel speakers were Gerry Beaney of Grant Thornton, Tim Goodman of Hermes, Chris Ogle Director of Artilium plc (an AIM listed company) and Kean-Ow Yong, co-author of the report. With a guest list of 120, there was considerable discussion, both in the question and answer session and during the reception afterwards.

As David Spence, Convener of the ICAS Research Committee noted, it was informative that the key findings of the research were reflected in the main topics of debate arising during the question and answer session. Points that were raised included:

• The report was encouraging and demonstrated many positive aspects and that compliance with the disclosure requirements of the QCA Guidelines is similar to that of the Combined Code for FTSE 350 companies. However, in some areas disclosure is poor and investors prefer full disclosure, even of non compliance, rather than silence. Also, there are a number of potential ‘quick wins’ which companies could adopt simply through disclosure of current practice, such as an attendance record of directors at board meetings and board evaluation.

• For those companies that do not disclose, or do not disclose full compliance with the QCA Guidelines on Corporate Governance, some commentators feel that either the directors are unaware of these Guidelines or that the bar is set too high. Finance directors fulfil a number of different roles in AIM companies, and other directors do not necessarily focus to the same degree on corporate governance. Difficulties are compounded by new and changing regulations in a number of areas including corporate governance and financial reporting.

• More rules would not prevent corporate failure, and there is a need to rely on principles and to avoid over-regulation. It is important to maintain AIM’s unique regulatory framework that involves regulating NOMADs rather than AIM companies.

• NOMADs and NOMAD/brokers have different perspectives on their relationships with AIM companies. NOMADs who are also brokers have a conflict of interest between duties to the companies and duties to their investors, when involved in raising new money.

• There were reservations expressed by some about the recommendation to increase the number of non-executive directors on boards, identifying that the focus should be more on quality rather than quantity. However, ideally, two non-executive directors should be the minimum on any board.

• The role of auditors may be important in encouraging compliance with the QCA guidelines.

• A question was raised as to whether there is any research into foreign companies’ corporate governance as the current research focused on UK companies. It was agreed that this would be a fruitful area for future research, looking at both foreign companies on the AIM market and at corporate governance in other countries.

The report is available to download free of charge from www.icas.org.uk/research.
British Accounting Association Conference - ICAS Panel Session

ICAS held a session at the BAA Conference in Blackpool on the 3rd April. The event was chaired by Professor Helliar and panel members were Alan Teixeira from the IASB, Andrew Lennard from the ASB and Professors Pauline Weetman, Mike Jones, Geoff Whittington and Ken Peasnell. The purpose of the session was to consider how research could be more relevant to policy makers and the profession, and whether more theoretical research was required to fill this gap.

The session identified some areas where academic research would be helpful to policy makers. These areas include:

- The presentation of financial information;
- Post implementation review of new standards;
- Special purpose vehicles and their inclusion on the balance sheet;
- Pensions accounting and its impact on behaviour;
- Accounting for leases;
- Fair value reporting and its impact on the markets;
- The conceptual framework – decision usefulness and stewardship;
- Stewardship and accountability versus fair value accounting;
- What is equity and what is liability? What is the difference?; and
- The history behind the development of specific standards.

ICAS would welcome research applications on any of the above topics. If you would like to discuss any of these ideas for future research, please contact the Research Centre. Application forms and guidance notes can be downloaded from www.icas.org.uk/research. We look forward to hearing from you.
New books published

Reporting on Internal Control in the UK and the US: Insights from the Turnbull and Sarbanes-Oxley Consultations
Laura F Spira - Oxford Brookes University
Catherine Gowthorpe
ISBN 978-1-904574-31-6

The changes that were brought about to internal control reporting by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and the Turnbull guidance provide a real opportunity to look at the implications of these requirements and the process of policy development.

This report reviews the two different approaches to internal control reporting in the US and UK, both in terms of definition and regulatory approach, before contrasting the responses of respondents to the Sarbanes-Oxley section 404 consultation and the Turnbull review consultation in 2004/5. These contrasting views provide a novel insight into the role of consultation in regulatory change in two important regimes.

The report demonstrates that, despite the perception of an ‘Anglo-American’ approach to corporate governance, there are distinct differences in approach to internal control reporting in the UK and US.

The report highlights significant issues for further research including: the impact of internal control reporting on organisations and audit committees; the implications for international convergence of different definitions of internal control; a cost comparison between a principles-based and a rules-based system for internal control disclosure; and the impact of disclosure requirements on the risk appetite of boards.

The Implementation of IFRS in the UK, Italy and Ireland
Theresa Dunne, Suzanne Fifield, Gary Finningham, Alison Fox, Gwen Hannah, Christine Helliar, David Power - University of Dundee
Monica Veneziani - University of Brescia, Italy
ISBN 978-1-904574-23-1

The move to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) for many listed companies in Europe, and elsewhere, has been the biggest change to corporate financial reporting of recent times. The process has not been without problems but the ultimate aim of increased comparability and international harmonisation of financial reporting remains a necessity for international business. The impact, benefits and costs of the transition to IFRS were always expected to vary from country to country, with each country having its own starting point, characteristics and culture. This comparative study therefore investigates the implementation of IFRS in the UK, Italy, and Ireland.

The study examines: the resultant changes in financial reporting, in terms of the additional disclosures and the impact of IFRS on profit and equity; the costs involved in implementation of IFRS; the most problematic international accounting standards for adopters; and the usefulness of the resulting IFRS information from the perspective of preparers and users.

The report concludes with eight policy recommendations for users, preparers and regulators. It is hoped that the study will aid companies which are implementing international standards at a later point, either as required by regulation or on a voluntary basis.
What do you do now? Ethical Issues Encountered by Chartered Accountants

David Molyneaux - The University of Aberdeen


How often do we ask ourselves “what should I do?” This report collates 28 true-life ethical dilemmas faced by chartered accountants, in practice or business. Its objective is to bring ethical problems to life and to encourage debate and understanding of such issues rather than providing definitive answers. Each scenario ends with: ‘What do you do now?’, before identifying factors to be considered, and offering analyses of these.

The scenarios are a reminder of how real dilemmas can either emerge over time or present themselves without warning. The examples in this report provide recognisable demands that can be discussed informally with colleagues to assess what each might do in such circumstances. The cases can also be used for more formal training and educational purposes to ensure that ethics is debated within the profession, in practice and business, and in academia.

Stay ahead with Research

Keep up to date with the latest ICAS Research news, including:-

- publications
- initiatives
- funding opportunities
- our Focus on Research Newsletter

Subscribe free to our email notification service by emailing your contact details to: research@icas.org.uk
Financial Black Holes: Accounting for Privately Financed Roads in the UK
Jean Shaoul, Anne Stafford, Pam Stapleton and Peter MacDonald

Recent years have seen a change in how our public services and assets are funded with a move towards more private finance, particularly in the transport, health and education sectors. This change in policy and the additional complexity involved in such schemes raises important questions for reporting and accountability. How can the public understand where public money is going, how it is being used, whether it is value for money, the risks involved and the extent of future commitments and liabilities?

This report examines whether the current reporting and disclosure for privately financed projects in the road sector can deliver accountability for public monies. The study includes an analysis of the disclosure and reporting of six UK road projects, including the M6 toll road and the M74. The report finds that there is a lack of information regarding privately funded schemes both in the public and private sector. This lack of information makes it very difficult for the public to assess whether the additional costs involved in private versus public finance are commensurate with the risk transfer to the private sector and the benefits to the public sector. The authors conclude with recommendations in respect of public private partnerships across the public sector in terms of: additional guidance to public authorities; disclosure of additional information in public sector accounts; improved access to information on private sector partners; and release of existing documentation on individual project’s development and assessment.

Foundation for Governance Research and Education

ICAS is a sponsor of the Foundation for Governance Research and Education (FGRE), an independent charitable foundation whose purpose is the development and promotion of the highest standards of effective and ethical governance in the UK and globally - for companies, financial institutions, public bodies and charities. The FGRE has recently published a document Engagement between Boards of FTSE - Small Cap and FTSE 250 Companies and Institutional Shareholders. This document will be available to download from www.foundationgre.com.
Large project grants awarded

Credit Unions in Scotland and Northern Ireland: Regulatory Change, Performance and Future Prospects

Donal McKillop - Queen’s University Belfast
John Wilson - St. Andrews University
Ann Marie Ward - Queen’s University Belfast

Credit unions are not-for-profit, member-owned, member controlled financial institutions, where membership is subject to satisfying a common bond. In recent years, credit unions have been increasingly seen as a key policy tool in the government’s fight against financial exclusion. This study uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to conduct a comparative study of credit unions in the two regions of the UK where credit unions are strongest, namely Scotland and Northern Ireland. The project will examine why credit union numbers are declining in Scotland but not in Northern Ireland. The project will also examine the reasons for the increase in bad debts reported by credit unions.

Applications for research funding

CAS is committed to supporting and encouraging high quality research that is timely, relevant to the public interest and useful to the accounting profession.

If you would like informal feedback on a research proposal, please contact Christine or Michelle at the Research Centre.

For details of our application process, please contact the Research Centre or visit our website at www.icas.org.uk/research
New grants awarded

Small project grants awarded

Recognition Versus Disclosure: The Case of Employers’ Pension Cost Accounting
Alan Goodacre and Yong Li - University of Stirling

An Exploratory Study of R&D Intensive Firms Under Financialisation
Pauline Gleadle, Open University and Colin Haslam - University of Hertfordshire

Internal Control and Financial Auditing in a Historical Perspective: The Case of Building Societies
Bernardo Batiz-Lazo, University of Leicester and Masayoshi Noguchi - Tokyo Metropolitan

The Effects of Gender and Family Structure on Partnership Prospects in Accountancy Public Practice
Elizabeth Gammie - Robert Gordon University
Kathleen Herbohn - University of Queensland
Rosalind Whiting - University of Otago

Seedcorn grants awarded

Corporate Governance Developments in the Latin American Andean Region
Maria Mina, Elizabeth Monk and Christine Helliar - University of Dundee

Financial and Business Reporting by Major Accounting and Financial Services Firms
Ian Fraser, Stirling University and Chris Pong - Nottingham University

A Comparison of the Risks Disclosed by UK Companies with Observed Events
Santhosh Abraham and Phil Darby - Napier University

Research grants are funded by The Scottish Accountancy Trust for Education and Research

The Scottish Accountancy Trust for Education and Research
Implications of E-business for Audit Practice and Education
Amr Kotb and Clare Roberts - Aberdeen University

Objective and research method

Although e-business is seen as an extension of traditional business, it introduces changes to the business environment that impact on the way organisations carry out their day-to-day businesses and their resultant risks and mitigating processes. These developments have posed challenges to and created opportunities for many professions including the auditing profession. The aim of this research project was to examine the potential impact of integrated web-based business models on the auditors’ technical work and implications of this for the auditors’ professional training and educational needs.

Audit practitioners’ perceptions on these issues were gathered from a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire sought financial auditors’ and IT auditors’ views under two main themes. First: auditors’ perceptions on the existing and potential changes to audit practices due to e-business. Second: auditors’ vision for the future of auditing profession and audit education in response to e-business. A sample of 1,321 questionnaires were issued in autumn 2007, with 90 completed questionnaires returned, resulting in a response rate of 7%.

Results

Preliminary findings from the study in respect of implications of e-business for audit practice and education include the following:

• E-business is not, by itself, the driver of likely audit change. Rather, there is a strong agreement (more than 65%) among respondents on a number of e-business factors that might cause change in the technical audit work of an e-business entity. These include: the absence of a traditional physical audit trail; transactional and non-transactional data flows becoming invisible; entities’ systems being made available to customers and suppliers and other stakeholders; the increased use of new types of IT-based internal controls; and the increased reliance on outsourcing of IT activities.

• There was general agreement among respondents that almost all audit practices underlying the audit of an e-business entity will be different from those that apply to the audit of any other type of entity. Four audit elements were identified as not changing very much in response to e-business factors, namely: audit conclusion and reporting; auditor’s liability; materiality criteria; and going concern assessment.

• There is a positive relationship between the level of integration and complexity of the web-based business model being audited and the time spent on the use of, and the nature of, IT-based audit practices and techniques. For example, auditors who audit more integrated web-business models (companies that interact with customers and suppliers through an integrated web-based supply chain where there is integration between web-processing activities and the back-office systems) indicated that they spent 61%-80% of audit time on using IT-based audit practices and techniques. This compared to auditors who audit non-integrated e-business models (companies that use the web only to build awareness among their stakeholders and/or take online orders and re-key them into business systems) who spent 1%-20% of audit time on using such IT-based audit practices and techniques.

• Although there is a majority agreement (almost 90%) among respondents that IT knowledge and skills are very important for financial auditors when auditing web-based businesses, 32.9% of auditors indicated that e-business was not covered in the previous year’s audit training.
Seedcorn projects - research results

Almost 67% of respondent auditors indicated that IT auditors at their firms are those who have IT qualifications either with training in accounting and auditing or not. This suggests that audit firms, particularly big four and other international firms, have a preference of recruiting IT specialists to conduct IT audit work of e-business audits rather than providing their financial auditors with training in IT expertise areas.

A consequence of e-business for the audit profession is that IT training for financial auditors will increase and greater emphasis will be placed on IT skills when recruiting. A majority of respondents (80%) agreed that the number of IT specialists used by audit firms will increase and 64% of those indicated that the ratio of IT specialists to financial auditors will increase. However, only 29% of respondents agreed that IT specialists will have higher senior positions within audit firms than before.

In terms of the IT knowledge and skills areas that might be needed for financial auditors in an e-business environment, more than half the respondents indicated a “very important” or “important” response to: e-business risks; IT audit solutions; communication supported by IT; general information systems concepts; IT strategy; IT management; and e-business applications and systems.

Interestingly, almost one third of respondents indicated a “neither important nor unimportant” response to almost all IT knowledge and skills areas listed.

Although there was no general agreement among respondents on the most suitable place for providing financial auditors with the IT knowledge and skills listed, university accounting education received most of respondents’ preferences to provide basic IT knowledge and professional accounting education was highly rated as the most suitable place for more technical and advanced IT knowledge.

Conclusions

Although the basic principles and essential practices underlying the audit of an e-business entity will not be different from those that apply to the audit of any other type of entity, e-businesses introduce potentially significant changes to the auditing profession. E-business change is far from a simple technical change to auditors’ technical work; it challenges the jurisdictional claims of audit practitioners over the e-business audit working area. Sample results indicate a lack of knowledge of, and experience with, e-business technical issues among financial auditors. Since e-business is a highly IT-driven business environment, it is unlikely, therefore, that a non-technical auditor will be able to provide assurance without significant support of an IT specialist. In so doing, the professional status of audit professionals is more likely to be challenged in an e-business audit environment. In light of this, the education required of graduates entering the job market today with a degree in accounting needs to be very different from the education currently provided. In particular, it might need to evolve from a world driven by manual systems or even stand-alone computerised systems to real-time enterprise-integrated systems. Moreover, audit education has to move from audit around the computer and through the computer to continuous audit tools and techniques. In short, today’s new accounting and auditing professionals have to possess, to a certain degree, the technical ability to approach web-based enterprise systems with the confidence not only to sustain their existing identity but also to open new markets for their profession.
A questionnaire survey was conducted in late 2007, that sought the views of accountants in practice on the following issues: the extent to which ethical statements in the Code of Ethics are important; the extent to which selected ethical dilemmas would impact on a firm's practice and image; and the extent to which organisational ethical culture is important in guiding behaviour. The responses were analysed in relation to gender, age, experience, and organisational position and information was also gathered on the drivers of ethical behaviour within firms and the ethical training provided. Five hundred questionnaires were issued with 78 usable responses received (a response rate of 16%).

The study revealed the following results:

**Beliefs about the Code of Ethics**

Respondents indicated that they believe the various components of the Code of Ethics to be either important or extremely important, especially those related to professional integrity and honesty, but less so in terms of serving public interest. Gender, age, length of experience in the profession and position in the organisation all had significant effects on their perceptions of the importance of the Code.

**The extent to which selected ethical dilemmas impact the firm**

Respondents were asked what the impact of five ethical dilemmas would be on the firm's practice, image, the firm's degree of concern, and extent of occurrences. The two ethical dilemmas, which respondents believed to have the greatest impact on the firm's ability to effectively carry out its professional work, and its reputational image, are: accepting a fee contingent on the operating results of the company being audited; and accepting a foreign leisure trip from an audit client. The remaining three ethical dilemmas perceived as having a moderate impact are: the partner purposely inaccurately recording the number of hours on an engagement; a senior member of the audit team previously being employed by the client; and the provision of both audit services and consulting on strategic review of business objectives to a client. The latter was perceived as having the least impact and the most common occurrence.

**The impact of organisational ethical culture in guiding ethical behaviour**

The majority of respondents (52%) indicated that the partners drive the ethical culture in their organisations and none made any reference to the professional code of ethics. Despite suggestions that partners are responsible in promoting ethical values within the organisation, results reveal that the majority of practitioners (63%) have been trained and professionally qualified without attending any ethical course training.

With regard to ethical training post-qualification, results indicate that at least 44% of accountants surveyed have not attended any ethical course post qualification and 31% had attended only one course. The survey also revealed that 85% of respondents indicate that their firms do not offer any training programs in ethics and, of those that provided training, such training only occurs on average every 3-5 years or when deemed required. However, 47% of respondents indicate that their firm has its own code of ethics in addition to the professional code of ethics.

As regards to the extent to which organisational ethical culture guides ethical behaviour, respondents agree that their managers behave ethically and that in order to progress in the firm, it is not necessary to compromise one's ethics. However, management do not seem to communicate clearly their intolerance to unethical behaviours. Respondents also indicate that disciplinary actions when violating ethics for personal gain are more severe than if such a violation is for the firm's gain.
ICAS/BAA Scotdoc Colloquium

The annual ICAS/BAA Accounting & Finance Scotdoc Colloquium, took place at the University of Glasgow on 20th June 2008, organised by the University of Glasgow School of Accounting & Finance. The Colloquium was once again well attended, with 56 PhD students and 31 academic supervisors, and most of the Scottish Universities represented.

The students presented their research at seven parallel session discussion groups, consisting of students and staff in similar areas of interest. This simulates the workshop-style presentations of full conferences which are often the first experience of a new researcher in making conference presentations. The Scotdoc Colloquium provides a good basis for a first attempt at such presentations to an audience from a range of institutions. Supervisors notice an improved performance in presentation when students face a mixed audience of familiar and unfamiliar persons.

The originating drive for this annual event was a meeting of heads of departments facilitated by ICAS, at which Professor Ed Arrington emphasised the importance of encouraging our research students as the next generation of university lecturers. The importance of the students as future colleagues was emphasised in the introduction to the session. This was also highlighted in a presentation from Professor Christine Helliar, ICAS Director of Research, who explained the support which is available from ICAS and SATER for research development.

The programme included two plenary sessions. Professor Jo Danbolt of the University of Glasgow explained the nature and process of the viva voce examination and the expectations of the examiners. Dr Melina Manochin, University of Aston, and Dr Michael Xin Guo, University of the West of Scotland, outlined their experiences of the transition from completing doctoral research to taking up their first lecturing posts. These presentations were of a very high quality and both reflected on the value they had gained from participating in the Scotdoc events.

Professor David Power is the Scottish representation of the British Accounting Association and he is delighted that the event continues to attract good numbers across accounting and finance. Supervisors regard the event as extremely valuable in encouraging their own students and confirming the continuing high standard of research supervision across Scotland. Students from smaller departments find the contacts from this meeting are very helpful in making them aware of the wider research community. The lively discussions over lunch indicated the enthusiasm for engaging in research conversations. All those participating appreciate greatly the continuing support from the Research Committee of ICAS and SATER.
**ICAS launches updated website**

The new and improved ICAS website was launched on 23rd July 2008. The main aim of the site is to improve access to important information and to provide a better service, with more accessible content.

The research section can still be accessed using the same address www.icas.org.uk/research. Any suggestions or feedback on the site would be welcomed.

Electronic copies of research reports from 2002 to date are now available to download free of charge from the website and we hope that these will be useful to both academics and students. We will continue to work on the list of publications older than 2002 and, where feasible, will endeavour to also make these older reports available electronically.

You can keep up to date with the activities of the other ICAS technical departments, including new publications, recent news and ICAS submissions using the following links:

- [www.icas.org.uk/auditing](http://www.icas.org.uk/auditing)
- [www.icas.org.uk/financialreporting](http://www.icas.org.uk/financialreporting)
- [www.icas.org.uk/business](http://www.icas.org.uk/business)
- [www.icas.org.uk/publicsector](http://www.icas.org.uk/publicsector)
- [www.icas.org.uk/tax](http://www.icas.org.uk/tax)

Remember you can sign up to receive email news of our new research publications, funding initiatives and events by emailing research@icas.org.uk

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**ICAS Research Committee welcomes new member**

ICAS is pleased to announce that Mary Campbell has accepted an invitation to join the ICAS Research Committee. Mary is a corporate financier with 25 years’ experience in the industry. She is Founder and Managing Director of Blâs Limited, the corporate finance boutique she established in January 2003.

She trained and qualified as a CA with Ernst & Young then spent 10 years at Nobles. She then joined the British Linen Bank, the merchant banking arm of the Bank of Scotland, where she initiated the buy-out of the Corporate Finance business from the British Linen Bank to form British Linen Advisers Limited.

Mary was awarded an OBE in the 2004 honours list for her contribution to economic development in the Highlands and Islands.
New ICAS Research Funding Strategy

Watch out for the new ICAS Research Funding Strategy which will be launched in January 2009. The new funding brochure and current research priorities will be available on the ICAS website from January 2009 - www.icas.org.uk/research

Or be the first to receive the brochure and list of priorities by e-subscribing to our research news service – email research@icas.org.uk with a request to e-subscribe.

Helping with your accountancy research

Did you know that the Information Service based at CA House in Edinburgh may be able to help you with your research? The Information Service is now run by ICAS rather than SATER but it still provides a free information service to anyone with an interest in accountancy – not just to ICAS members. As well as answering enquiries made in person it also answers those received by email, phone or fax to cater for the many people who cannot visit in person. The library catalogue can be accessed from the ICAS website - www.icas.org.uk - and the Information Service can lend book stock to non-members – and even post books out to you free of charge.

If you are researching the history of the accounting profession in Scotland the Information Service is an excellent source of material. It has all issues of CA Magazine back to when the magazine first started as The Accountants’ Magazine in 1897. There are also a number of books looking at the history of the accounting profession in Scotland and the key people involved. Articles and obituaries in CA Magazine are another useful source of information. An archive of historical material on the development of ICAS is also available. It includes, for example, brochures from the ICAS summer schools in the 1950s, and information about the Lady Members Group meetings.

Older material about ICAS is held at the National Archives of Scotland. The collection includes items such as Council minute books from the 1880s and Annual reports from the 1920s. The collection is available for researchers to consult.

The National Library of Scotland holds the ICAS Antiquarian Book Collection. This collection of rare accounting and bookkeeping books was started in 1854 and is one of the very finest collections in the world. It consists of over 1,000 works – including one by Luca Pacioli from 1494. Items are available for consultation on appointment.

To find out more about how the Information Service can help with your research please contact infoservice@icas.org.uk or by phoning +44 (0)131 467 0138. It is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.
Dates for your diary

17th December 2008  BAA Corporate Governance SIG Conference
Lincoln Inn Fields, London

29th - 30th March 2009  BAA Auditing SIG Conference
Thistle Hotel, Exeter

21st - 23rd April 2009  BAA Annual Conference
University of Dundee

12th - 15th May 2009  EAA Annual Congress
Tampere, Finland

20th - 22nd May 2009  BAA Accounting Education SIG Conference
Wivenhoe House, University of Essex

The Research Team...

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